





SERMONS

PREACHED

UPON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS,

BY

ISAAC BARROW, D. D.

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Cambridge, and one of His MAJESTIE's
Chaplains in Ordinary.

L O N D O N,

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20 MAY 1916

OXFORD

To the Right Honourable,
H E N A G E
Lord *FINCH*, Baron of *Da-*
ventry, Lord High Chancellour of
ENGLAND, and One of
His MAJESTIE's most Ho-
nourable Privy Council.

My LORD,

I Take the boldness to present your Lord-
ship with some of the First-fruits of my de-
ceased Son's Studies in Divinity. And since
it hath pleased God, to my unspeakable grief
and loss, to deprive me of so great a blessing,
and comfort of my old age; it is no small mi-
tigation of my sorrow, that whilst he liv'd,
he was not unprofitable to the world, and
that now he is dead, he hath left those mo-
numents of his piety and learning behind him,
which I am told are generally thought not
unworthy to be imparted to the publick.

If these Sermons be such, I have no cause

The Epistle Dedicatory.

to doubt but they will easily obtain your Lordship's Patronage, who are so known a Favourer of all that is vertuous and worthy, especially of Religion and the Ministers of it. Of which I had particular experience upon the death of my good Son, when your Lordship was pleased, with so much humanity and condescension, to send to comfort me under that sad loss, and to express your own resentment of it.

But what-ever these Sermons be, since I have no other way to acknowledge my great obligations to your Lordship upon all occasions, I hope your Lordship will please favourably to accept of this, how small soever, yet sincere testimony of my dutifull respects and gratitude. I am,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's most obliged

and most obedient Servant,

Thomas Barrow.



THE
PUBLISHER
TO
THE READER.

THE *Authour* of the following
SERMONS was so publick-
ly known, and so highly esteem-
ed by all Learned and Good men,
that nothing either needs or can be said
more to his advantage. Not but that I
think it very fit, that the Picture of this
truly great Man should be drawn at full
length, for the knowledge and imitati-
on of posterity; and it will, I hope,
be done hereafter by some more skil-
full hand: However, I shall not within
the narrow limits of a *Preface*, so much
as attempt the Character of him; of
whom, either not a little, or nothing
at all ought to be said.

And the *Sermons* themselves do as lit-
tle need commendation, as the *Authour*;

The Publisher to the Reader.

their own excellency and eloquence will praise them best. I shall therefore onely advertise the *Reader* of some few things concerning them.

The Design of the *Five* first is, to recommend Religion to our esteem and practice, from the consideration of the manifold excellencies and advantages of it. The *Four* next do treat of the two great Duties of Religion, and parts of Divine Worship, *Prayer* and *Thanksgiving*; and contain likewise a very powerfull perswasive to the practice of them. The *Three* last were preach'd upon three solemn Occasions: The *First* of them upon the 29. of *May*, 1676. the Anniversary of His MAJESTIE's happy *Restoration*: The *Second* upon the 5. of *November*, 1675. in commemoration of our great Deliverance from the *Powder-Treason*: both in the year of his *Vice-Chancellourship*: The *Last* at the Consecration of the Bishop of *Man*, (the now Lord Bishop of *S. Asaph*,) his Uncle; in which he pleads for the due Respect and Revenue of the Clergy with so much modesty, and yet with so great force of reason and eloquence, that the whole Profession may justly think themselves for ever indebted to him.

Some

The Publisher to the Reader.

Some of these *Sermons* were the very first that he made; by which we may judge with what preparation and furniture he entred upon this Sacred employment. The *first* of them was preach'd at *S. Mary's in Cambridge, June 30. 1661.* and was, I think, the first that he ever preach'd. Those *two* excellent *Sermons* of *Thanksgiving* were, as I am inform'd, the next. The *fourth* in order, was the first that he preach'd before the *King's Majesty*. In the placing of them as they now stand, I had very little regard to the order of Time, but rather to some small reason taken from the Subject matter of them, not worth the mentioning; any reason almost being good enough in a matter so indifferent, and where none is necessary.

Besides these, the *Authour* hath left many other excellent *Sermons*, upon the most important and usefull Subjects in *Divinity*; particularly, upon all the *Articles* of the *Creed*: and several other very learned Discourses and Treatises, *Theological* and *Mathematical*: which may, God willing, in convenient time be communicated to the publick, to the great advantage and furtherance of Religion and Learning.

In

The Publisher to the Reader.

In the mean time, I heartily recommend these *Sermons* to thy serious perusal; and shall onely say this of them, That as they want no other kind of excellency, so particularly they are animated throughout with so genuine a spirit of true Piety and Goodness, that he must either be a perfectly good, or prodigiously bad man, that can read them over without being the better for them.

THE



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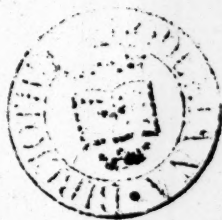
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Liber hic (*cui Titulus, Ser-*
mons preached upon
several Occasions, by Doc-
tour *Barrow,*)

IMPRIMATUR.

Ex Aedibus
Lamb. I. Nov.
1677.

Geor. Hooper, R^{mo} D^{no}
D^{no} Gilberto, Archiep.
Cant. à Sacris Domesti-
cis.



The First Sermon.

PROV. 3. 17.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

THE meaning of these words seems plain and obvious, and to need little explication. *Her ways*, that is, the ways of Wisdom. What this Wisdom is, I shall not undertake accurately to describe. Briefly, I understand by it, An habitual skill or faculty of judging aright about matters of practice; and chusing according to that right judgment, and conforming the actions to such good choice. *Ways* and *paths* in Scripture-dialect are the courses and manners of action. For *doing* there is commonly called *walking*; and the methods of doing are the *ways* in which we walk. By *pleasantness* may be meant the joy and delight accompanying, and by *peace* the content
B
and

and satisfaction ensuing such a course of actions. So that, in short, the sense of these words seems simply to be this, That a course of life directed by wisdom and good judgment is delightfull in the practice, and brings content after it. The truth of which Proposition it shall be my endeavour at this time to confirm by divers Reasons, and illustrate by several instances.

*Veritatis luce
menti hominis
nihil dulcius.
Cic. Acad. 2.*

I. Then, Wisdom of it self is delectable and satisfactory, as it implies a revelation of Truth, and a detection of Error to us. 'Tis like Light, pleasant to behold, casting a sprightly lustre, and diffusing a benign influence all about; presenting a goodly prospect of things to the eyes of our mind; displaying objects in their due shapes, postures, magnitudes, and colours; quickning our spirits with a comfortable warmth, and disposing our minds to a chearfull activity; dispelling the darkness of ignorance, scattering the mists of doubt, driving away the spectres of delusive fancy; mitigating the cold of sullen melancholy; discovering obstacles, securing progress, and making the passages of life clear, open, and pleasant. We are all naturally

turally endowed with a strong appetite to know, to see, to pursue Truth; and with a bashfull abhorrency from being deceived, and entangled in mistake. And as success in enquiry after Truth affords matter of joy and triumph; so being conscious of Errour, and miscarriage therein, is attended with shame and sorrow. These desires Wisdom in the most perfect manner satisfies, not by entertaining us with dry, empty, fruitless theories, upon mean and vulgar subjects; but by enriching our minds with excellent and usefull knowledge, directed to the noblest objects, and serviceable to the highest ends. Nor in its own nature onely, but,

II. Much more in its worthy consequences is Wisdom exceedingly pleasant and peaceable: in general, by disposing us to acquire and to enjoy all the good, delight and happiness we are capable of; and by freeing us from all the inconveniences, mischiefs and infelicities our condition is subject to. For what-ever good from clear understanding, deliberate advice, sagacious foresight, stable resolution, dexterous address, right intention and orderly pro-

ceeding doth naturally result, Wisdom confers: what-ever evil blind ignorance, false presumption, unwary credulity, precipitate rashness, unsteady purpose, ill contrivance, backwardness, inhability, unwieldiness and confusion of thought beget, Wisdom prevents. From a thousand snares and treacherous allurements, from innumerable rocks and dangerous surprises, from exceedingly many needless incumbrances and vexatious toils of fruitless endeavour, she redeems and secures us. More particularly,

III. Wisdom assures us we take the best course, and proceed as we ought. For by the same means we judge aright, and reflecting upon that judgment are assured we doe so: as the same arguments by which we demonstrate a theorem convince us we have demonstrated it, and the same light by which we see an object makes us know we see it. And this assurance in the progress of the action exceedingly pleases, and in the sequel of it infinitely contents us. He that judges amiss, not perceiving clearly the rectitude of his process, proceeds usually with a dubious sollicitude, and at length,

length, discovering his error, condemns his own choice, and receives no other satisfaction but of repentance. Like a Traveller, who being uncertain whether he goes in the right way, wanders in continual perplexity, till he be informed, and then too late, understanding his mistake, with regret seeks to recover himself into it. But he that knows his way, and is satisfied that it is the true one, makes on merrily and carelessly, not doubting he shall in good time arrive to his designed journey's end. Two troublesome mischiefs therefore Wisdom frees us from, the company of anxious doubt in our actions, and the consequence of bitter repentance. For no man can doubt of what he is sure, nor repent of what he knows good.

IV. Wisdom begets in us a hope of success in our actions, and is usually attended therewith. Now what is more delicious than hope? what more satisfactory than success? That is like the pursuit of a flying enemy, this like gathering the spoil; that like viewing the ripe corn, this like the joy of harvest itself. And he that aims at a good end, and knows he uses proper means to at-

tain it, why should he despair of success, since effects naturally follow their causes, and the Divine providence is wont to afford its concurrence to such proceedings? Beside that such well-grounded hope confirms resolution, and quickens activity, which mainly conduce to the prosperous issue of designs. Farther,

V. Wisdom prevents discouragement from the possibility of ill success, yea and makes disappointment it self tolerable. For if either the foresight of a possible miscarriage should discourage us from adventuring on action, or inculpable frustration were intolerable, we should with no heart apply ourselves to any thing; there being no designs in this world, though founded upon the most sound advice, and prosecuted by the most diligent endeavour, which may not be defeated, as depending upon divers causes above our power, and circumstances beyond our prospect. The inconstant opinions, uncertain resolutions, mutable affections, and fallacious pretences of men, upon which the accomplishment of most projects rely, may easily deceive and disappoint us. The imperceptible course of nature exerting

exerting it self in sudden tempests, diseases, and unlucky casualties, may surprise us, and give an end to our businesses and lives together. However, the irresistible power of the Divine providence, guided by the unsearchable counsel of his will, we can never be assured that it will not interpose, and hinder the effects of our endeavours. Yet notwithstanding, when we act prudently, we have no reason to be disheartened; because, having good intentions, and using fit means, and having done our best, as no deserved blame, so no considerable damage can arrive to us: and though we find Almighty God hath crossed us, yet we are sure he is not displeased with us. Which consideration, wherewith Wisdom furnishes us, will make the worst success not onely tolerable, but comfortable to us. For hence we have reason to hope, that the All-wise Goodness reserves a better reward for us, and will sometime recompense not onely the good purposes we unhappily pursued, but also the unexpected disappointment we patiently endured; and that however we shall be no losers in the end. Which discourse is mainly fortified by considering how the best

and wisest attempts have oft miscarried. We see *Moses*, authorized by God's command, directed by his counsel, and conducted by his hand, intended to bring the *Israelites* into the land of *Canaan*; yet by the unreasonable incredulity and stubborn perverseness of that people he had his purpose frustrated. The holy Prophets afterward earnestly endeavoured to contain the same people within compass of obedience to the Divine commands, and to reduce them from their idolatrous and wicked courses; yet without correspondent effect. Our Saviour, by the example of his holy life, continual instruction, and vehement exhortations, assayed to procure a belief of and submission to his most excellent Doctrine; yet how few *believed his report*, and complied with his Discipline? Yea, Almighty God himself often complains, how in a manner his designs were defeated, his desires thwarted, his offers refused, his counsels rejected, his expectations deceived. *Wherefore, (saith he concerning his Vineyard) when I looked it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?* And again, *I have spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people.* And again, *I have even sent unto*

Isa. 5. 4.

Isa. 65. 2.

Jer. 7. 25, 26.

unto you all my prophets daily, rising up early, and sending them; yet they hearkened not unto me. Wherefore there is no good cause we should be disheartned, or vexed, when success is wanting to well-advised purposes. 'Tis foolish and ill-grounded intentions, and practices unwarrantable by good reason, that make the undertakers solicitous of success, and being defeated leave them disconsolate. Yea farther,

VI. Wisdom makes all the troubles, griefs and pains incident to life, whether casual adversities, or natural afflictions, easie and supportable; by rightly valuing the importance, and moderating the influence of them. It suffers not busie fancy to alter the nature, amplify the degree, or extend the duration of them, by representing them more sad, heavy and remediless then they truly are. It allows them no force beyond what naturally and necessarily they have, nor contributes nourishment to their increase. It keeps them at a due distance, not permitting them to encroach upon the Soul, or to propagate their influence beyond their proper sphere. It will not let external mischances, as poverty and dis-

The First Sermon.

disgrace, to produce an inward sense which is beyond their natural efficacy; nor corporeal affections of sickness and pain to disturb the mind, with which they have nothing to doe. The region of these malignant distempers being at most but the habit of the body, Wisdom by effectual antidotes repels them from the heart, and inward parts of the Soul. If any thing, sin, and our unworthy miscarriages toward God, should vex and discompose us; yet this trouble Wisdom, by representing the Divine Goodness, and his tender mercies in our ever-Blessed Redeemer, doth perfectly allay. And as for all other adversities, it abates their noxious power, by shewing us they are either meerly imaginary, or very short and temporary; that they admit of remedy, or at most do not exclude comfort, not wholly hindring the operations of the mind, nor extinguishing its joys; that they may have a profitable use, and pleasant end; and, however, neither imply bad Conscience, nor induce obligation to punishment. For,

VII. Wisdom hath always a good Conscience attending it, that purest delight and richest cordial of the Soul;
that

that brazen wall, and impregnable fortress against both external assaults, and internal commotions; that *continual feast*, whereon the mind, destitute of all other repast, with a never-languishing appetite may entertain it self; that faithful witness, and impartial judge, whoever accuses, always acquitting the innocent Soul; that certain friend, in no streight failing, in no adversity deserting; that sure refuge in all storms of fortune, and persecutions of disgrace. Which (as *Solomon* here notes) renders a man's *sleep sweet*, and undisturbed with fearfull phantasms, his heart light, and his steps secure; and, if any thing, can make the Stoical paradox good, and cause the Wise man to smile in extremity of torment; arming his mind with an invincible courage, and infusing a due confidence into it, whereby he bears up chearfully against malicious reproach, undauntedly sustains adversity, and triumphs over bad fortune. And this invaluable treasure the Wise man is only capable of possessing; who certainly knows, and heartily approves the grounds upon which he proceeds; whereas the fool, building his choice upon blind chance, or violent passion, or giddy

dy fancy, or uncertain example, not upon the steady warrant of good reason, cannot avoid being perplexed with suspicion of mistake, and so necessarily is deprived of the comfort of a good Conscience.

VIII. Wisdom confers a facility, expert readiness, and dexterity in action; which is a very pleasant and commodious quality, and exceedingly sweetens activity. To do things with difficulty, struggling, and immoderate contention, disheartens a man, quells his courage, blunts the edge of his resolution, renders him sluggish and averse from business, though apprehended never so necessary, and of great moment. These obstructions Wisdom removes, facilitating operations by directing the intention to ends possible and attainable, by suggesting fit means and instruments to work by, by contriving right methods and courses of process; the mind by it being stored with variety of good principles, sure rules, and happy expedients, reposed in the memory, and ready upon all occasions to be produced, and employed in practice.

IX. Wise-

IX. Wisdom begets a sound, healthfull and harmonious complexion of the Soul, disposing us with judgment to distinguish, and with pleasure to relish savoury and wholesome things, but to nauseate and reject such as are ingratefull and noxious to us ; thereby capacifying us to enjoy pleasantly and innocently all those good things the Divine Goodness hath provided for, and consigned to us : whence to the Soul proceeds all that comfort, joy and vigour, which results to the Body from a good constitution, and perfect health.

X. Wisdom acquaints us with our selves, our own temper and constitution, our propensions and passions, our habitudes and capacities ; a thing not onely of mighty advantage, but of infinite pleasure and content to us. No man in the world less knows a fool then himself ; nay, he is more then ignorant, for he constantly errs in the point, taking himself for, and demeaning himself as toward another, a better, a wiser and abler man then he is. He hath wonderfull conceits of his own qualities and faculties ; he affects commendations incompetent to him ; he soars at employment

ment surpassing his ability to manage. No Comedy can represent a mistake more odde, and ridiculous, than his: for he wanders, and stares, and hunts after, but never can find nor discern himself; but always encounters with a false shadow in stead thereof, which he passionately hugs and admires. But a Wise man, by constant observation, and impartial reflexion upon himself, grows very familiar with himself: he perceives his own inclinations, which if bad, he strives to alter and correct; if good, he cherishes and corroborates them: he apprehends the matters he is fitting for, and capable to manage, neither too mean and unworthy of him, nor too high and difficult for him; and those applying his care to, he transacts easily, chearfully, and successfully. So being neither puffed up with vain and over-weening opinion, nor dejected with heartless diffidence of himself; neither admiring, nor despising; neither irksomely hating, nor fondly loving himself; he continues in good humour, maintains a sure friendship and fair correspondence with himself, and rejoices in the retirement and private conversation with his own thoughts: whence flows a pleasure
sure

sure and satisfaction unexpressible.

XI. Wisdom procures and preserves a constant favour and fair respect of men, purchases a good name, and upholds reputation in the world: which things are naturally desirable, commodious for life, encouragements to good, and preventive of many inconveniences. The composed frame of mind, uniform and comely demeanour, compliant and inoffensive conversation, fair and punctual dealing, considerate motions, and dexterous addresses of Wise men naturally beget esteem and affection in those that observe them. Neither then these things is there any thing more commendable to humane regard. As symmetry and harmony to the animal senses, so delectable is an even temper of Soul and orderly tenour of actions to rational apprehensions. Folly is freakish and humorous, impertinent and obstreperous, inconstant and inconsistent, peevish and exceptionous; and consequently fastidious to society, and productive of averfation and disrespect. But the Wise man is stable in his ways, consonant to himself, futing his actions to his words, and those to his principles, and all to the rule of
right

right reason ; so that you may know where to find him , and how to deal with him , and may easily please him , which makes his acquaintance acceptable , and his person valuable : beside that real worth of it self commands respect , and extorts veneration from men , and usually prosperity waits upon his well-advised attempts , which exceedingly adorn , and advance the credit of the undertaker : however , if he fail sometime , his usual deportment salves his repute , and easily makes it credible it was no fault of his , but of his fortune . If a fool prosper , the honour is attributed to propitious chance ; if he miscarry , to his own ill management : but the entire glory of happy undertakings crowns the head of Wisdom ; while the disgrace of unlucky events falls elsewhere . His light , like that of the Sun , cannot totally be eclipsed ; it may be dimmed , but never extinguished , and always maintains a day , though over-clouded with misfortune . Who less esteems the famous *African* Captain for being overthrown in that last fatal battel , wherein he is said to have shewn the best skill , and yet endured the worst of success ? Who contemns *Cato* , and other the grave

grave Citizens of *Rome*, for embracing the just, but improsperous Cause of the Commonwealth? A Wise man's circumstances may vary and fluctuate like the clouds about a rock; but he persists unmovably the same, and his reputation unshaken: for he can always render a good account of his actions, and by reasonable apology elude the assaults of reproach.

XII. Wisdom instructs us to examine, compare, and rightly to value the objects that court our affections, and challenge our care; and thereby regulates our passions, and moderates our endeavours, which begets a pleasant serenity and peaceable tranquillity of mind. For when, being deluded with false shews, & relying upon ill-grounded presumptions, we highly esteem, passionately affect, and eagerly pursue things of little worth in themselves, or concernment to us, as we unhandsomely prostitute our affections, and prodigally mis-spend our time, and vainly lose our labour; so the event not answering our expectation, our minds thereby are confounded, disturb'd, and distemper'd. But when, guided by right reason, we conceive great esteem of, and zealously are enamoured with,

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and

and vigorously strive to attain things of excellent worth, and weighty consequence; the conscience of having well placed our affections, and well employed our pains, and the experience of fruits corresponding to our hopes ravishes our mind with unexpressible content. And so it is; Present appearance and vulgar conceit ordinarily impose upon our fancies, disguising things with a deceitfull varnish, and representing those that are vainest with the greatest advantage; whilst the noblest objects, being of a more subtile and spiritual nature, like fairest Jewels enclosed in a homely box, avoid the notice of gross sense, and pass undiscerned by us. But the light of Wisdom, as it unmasks specious imposture, and bereaves it of its false colours; so it penetrates into the retirements of true Excellency, and reveals its genuine lustre. For example, Corporeal Pleasure, which so powerfully allures and enchants us, Wisdom declares that it is but a present, momentany and transient satisfaction of brutish sense, dimming the light, sullyng the beauty, impairing the vigour, and restraining the activity of the mind; diverting it from better operations, and indisposing it to
enjoy

enjoy purer delights ; leaving no comfortable relish or gladsome memory behind it, but often followed with bitterness, regret and disgrace. That the Profit the World so greedily gapes after is but a possession of trifles, not valuable in themselves, nor rendering the Masters of them so ; accidentally obtained, and promiscuously enjoyed by all sorts, but commonly by the worst of men ; difficultly acquired, and easily lost ; however, to be used but for a very short time, and then to be resigned into uncertain hands. That the Honour men so dote upon is, ordinarily, but the difference of a few petty circumstances, a peculiar name or title, a determinate place, a distinguishing ensign ; things of onely imaginary excellence, derived from chance, and conferring no advantage, except from some little influence they have upon the arbitrary opinion and fickle humour of the people ; complacence in which is vain, and reliance upon it dangerous. That Power and dominion, which men so impatiently struggle for, are but necessary evils introduced to restrain the bad tempers of men ; most evil to them that enjoy them ; requiring tedious attendance, distrac-

ting care, and vexatious toil; attended with frequent disappointment, opprobrious censure, and dangerous envy; having such reall burthens, and slavish encumbrances, sweetned onely by superficial pomps, strained obsequiousness, some petty privileges, and exemptions scarce worth the mentioning. That Wit and parts, of which men make such ostentation, are but natural endowments, commendable onely in order to use, apt to engender pride and vanity, and hugely dangerous if abused or misemployed? What should I mention Beauty, that fading toy; or bodily Strength and activity, qualities so palpably inconsiderable? Upon these and such like flattering objects, so adored by vulgar opinion, Wisdom exercising severe and impartial judgment, and perceiving in them no intrinsic excellence, no solid content springing from them, no perfection thence accruing to the mind, no high reward allotted to them, no security to the future condition, or other durable advantages proceeding from them; it concludes they deserve not any high opinion of the mind, nor any vehement passion of the Soul, nor any laborious care to be employed

ployed on them, and moderates our affections toward them: it frees us from anxious desire of them; from being transported with excessive joy in the acquisition of them; from being overwhelmed with disconsolate sorrow at the missing of them, or parting with them; from repining and envying at those who have better success than our selves in the procuring them; from immoderate toil in getting, and care in preserving them: and so delivering us from all these unquiet anxieties of thought, tumultuous perturbations of passion, and tedious vexations of body, it maintains our minds in a chearfull calm, quiet indifferency, and comfortable liberty. On the other side, things of real worth and high concernment, that produce great satisfaction to the mind, and are mainly conducive to our happiness, such as are a right understanding and strong sense of our obligations to Almighty God, and relations to men, a sound temper and complexion of mind, a vertuous disposition, a capacity to discharge the duties of our places, a due qualification to enjoy the happiness of the other World; these and such like things, by discovering their nature,

and the effects resulting from them, it engages us highly to esteem, ardently to affect, and industriously to pursue; so preventing the inconveniences that follow the want of them, and conveying the benefits arising from the possession of them.

XIII. Wisdom distinguishes the circumstances, limits the measures, determines the modes, appoints the fit seasons of action; so preserving *decorum* and order, the parent of peace, and preventing confusion, the mother of iniquity, strife and disquiet. 'Tis in the business of humane life as in a building: a due proportion of bigness, a fit situation of place, a correspondency of shape, and sutableness of colour, is to be observed between the parts thereof: a defect in any of which requisites, though the materials hap to be choice and excellent, makes the whole fabrick deformed and ugly to judicious apprehension. The best actions, if they swell, and exceed their due measure, if they be unskilfully misplaced, if in uncouth manner performed, they lose their quality, and turn both to the disgrace and disadvantage of life. 'Tis commendable to pray;
but

but they that would always be performing that duty, by their absurd devotion procured to themselves the title of Hereticks: and they that will stand praying in places of publick concourse, deserved our Saviour's reprehensions; and those men who, against the custom and ordinary use, would needs pray with their faces covered, you know *S. Paul* insinuates of them, that they were fond and contentious persons. Friendly admonition is very laudable, and of rare use; but being upon all occasions immoderately used, or in publick society so as to encroach upon modesty, or endamage reputation; or when the person admonished is otherwise employed, and attent upon his business; or being delivered in an imperiously-insulting way, or in harsh and opprobrious language; it becomes unfavoury and odious, and both in shew and effect resembles a froward malicious exceptionfness. 'Twere infinite to compute in how many instances want of due order, measure and manner, do spoil and incommodate action. 'Tis Wisdom that applies remedy to these mischiefs. Things must be compared to, and arbitrated by, her standard, or else they will contain something

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thing of monstrous enormity ; either strutting in unwieldy bulk , or sinking in defective scantness. If she do not fashion and model circumstances, they will sit ugly on the things that wear them ; if she do not temper the colours, and describe the lineaments, the draught of practice will be but rude and imperfect , and little resemble the true patterns of duty : but if she interpose, and perform her part, all things will appear conformable, neat and delicate.

XIV. Wisdom discovers our relations, duties and concernments, in respect of men , with the natural grounds of them ; thereby both qualifying and inclining us to the discharge of them : whence exceeding convenience, pleasure and content ensues. By it we understand we are parts and members of the great Body, the Universe ; and are therefore concerned in the good management of it , and are thereby obliged to procure its order and peace , and by no irregular undertaking to disturb or discompose it ; which makes us honest and peaceable men : that we proceed from the same primitive stock, are children of the same father, and partake of the same blood with

with all men ; are endowed with like faculties of mind, passions of Soul, shape of body, and sense of things : that we have equally implanted in our original constitution inclinations to love, pity, gratitude, sociableness, quiet, joy, reputation : that we have an indispensable need and impatient desire of company, assistance, comfort, and relief: that therefore it is according to the design of nature, and agreeable to reason, that to those, to whom our natural condition by so many bands of cognation, similitude, and mutual necessitude, hath knit and conjoyned us, we should bear a kind respect and tender affection; should chearfully concur in undergoing the common burthens; should heartily wish and industriously promote their good, assist them in accomplishing their reasonable desires, thankfully requite the courtesies received from them, congratulate and rejoyce with them in their prosperity, comfort them in their distresses, and, as we are able, relieve them; however, tenderly compassionate their disappointments, miseries and sorrows. This renders us kind and courteous neighbours; sweet and gratefull companions. It represents unto us the dreadful

full

full effects and insupportable mischiefs arising from breach of faith, contravening the obligations of solemn pacts, infringing publick laws, deviating from the received rules of equity, violating promises, and interrupting good correspondence among men: by which considerations it engages us to be good citizens, obedient subjects, just dealers, and faithfull friends. It minds us of the blindness, impotence and levity, the proneness to mistake, and misbehaviour that humane nature necessarily is subject to; deserving rather our commiseration, then anger or hatred, which prompts us to bear the infirmities of our brethren, to be gentle in censure, to be insensible of petty affronts, to pardon injuries, to be patient, exorable, and reconcilable to those that give us greatest cause of offence. It teaches us, the good may, but the evil of our neighbour can in no wise advantage us; that from the suffering of any man, simply considered, no benefit can accrue, nor natural satisfaction arise to us; and that therefore 'tis a vain, base, brutish and unreasonable thing, for any cause whatsoever, to desire or delight in the grief, pain or misery of our neighbour, to hate or envy him,

him, or insult over him, or devise mischief to him, or prosecute revenge upon him; which makes us civil, noble and placable enemies, or rather no enemies at all. So that Wisdom is in effect the genuine parent of all moral and political vertue, justice and honesty; as *Solomon* says in her person, *I lead in the way of righteousness, and in the midst of the paths of judgment.* Prov. 8. 20. And how sweet these are in the practice, how comfortable in the consequences, the testimony of continual experience and the unanimous consent of all wise men sufficiently declare. But farther,

XV. The principal advantage of Wisdom is, its acquainting us with the Nature and reason of true Religion, and affording convictive arguments to persuade to the Practice of it; which is accompanied with the purest delight, and attended with the most solid content imaginable. I say, the Nature of Religion, wherein it consists, and what it requires; the mistake of which produceth daily so many mischiefs and inconveniences in the world, and exposes so good a name to so much reproach. It sheweth it consisteth not in fair professions and
glo-

glorious pretences, but in real practice; not in a pertinacious adherence to any Sect or party, but in a sincere love of goodness, and dislike of naughtiness, where-ever discovering it self; not in vain ostentations and flourishes of outward performance, but in an inward good complexion of mind, exerting it self in works of true Devotion and Charity; not in a nice orthodoxie, or politick subjection of our judgments to the peremptory dictates of men, but in a sincere love of Truth, in a hearty approbation of and compliance with the Doctrines fundamentally good, and necessary to be believed; not in harsh censuring and virulently inveighing against others, but in carefull amending our own ways; not in a peevish crossness and obstinate repugnancy to received laws and customs, but in a quiet and peaceable submission to the express Laws of God, and lawfull commands of man; not in a furious zeal for or against trivial circumstances, but in a conscionable practising the substantial parts of Religion; not in a frequent talking or contentious disputing about it, but in a ready observance of the unquestionable rules and prescripts of it. In a word,

that

that Religion consists in nothing else but doing what becomes our relation to God, in a conformity or similitude to his Nature, and in a willing obedience to his holy Will: to which by potent incentives it allures and persuades us; by representing to us his transcendently-glorious Attributes, conspicuously displayed in the frame, order and government of the World; that wonderfull Power, which erected this great and goodly fabrick; that incomprehensible Wisdom, which preserves it in a constant harmony; that immense Goodness, which hath so carefully provided for the various necessities, delights and comforts of its innumerable inhabitants. I say, by representing those infinitely-glorious Perfections, it engages us with highest respect to esteem, reverence and honour him. Also, by minding us of our manifold obligations to him, our receiving being, life, reason, sense, all the faculties, powers, excellencies, privileges and commodities of our natures from him; of his tender Care and loving Providence continually supporting and protecting us; of his liberal Beneficence, patient Indulgence, and earnest desire of our good and happiness by manifold expressions

sions evidently manifested toward us; it inflames us with ardent love, and obliges us to officious gratitude toward him. Also, by declaring the necessary and irreconcilable contrariety of his Nature to all impurity and perverseness, his peerless Majesty, his irresistible Power, and his all-seeing Knowledge, it begets an awfull dread and a devout fear of him. By discovering him from his infinite Benignity willing, and from his unlimited Power onely able to supply our needs, relieve us in distresses, protect us from dangers, and confer any valuable benefit upon us, it engenders faith, and encourages us to rely upon him. By revealing to us his supereminent Sovereignty, uncontrollable Dominion, and unquestionable Authority over us; together with the admirable excellency, wisdom and equity of his Laws, so just and reasonable in themselves, so suitable to our nature, so conducive to our good, so easie and practicable, so sweet and comfortable; it powerfully inclines, and by a gentle force as it were constrains us to obedience. By such efficacious inducements Wisdom urges us to all duties of Religion, and withall surely directs us (as I before said) wherein it consists;

consists ; teaching us to have right and worthy apprehensions of the Divine nature , to which our Devotion (if true and good) must be suited and conformed : and so it frees us, as from irreligion and profane neglect of God, so from fond superstitions, the sources of so much evil to mankind. For he that wisely hath considered the Wisdom , Goodness and Power of God, cannot imagine God can with a regardless eye overlook his presumptuous contempts of his Laws, or endure him to proceed in an outrageous defiance of Heaven, to continue hurting himself, or injuring his neighbour ; nor can admit unreasonable terrours, or entertain suspicious conceits of God, as of an imperious Master, or implacable Tyrant over him, exacting impossible performances from, or delighting in the fatal miseries of his Creatures; nor can suppose him pleased with hypocritical shews , and greatly taken with superficial courtships of ceremonious address ; or that he can in any wise favour our fiery zeals, fierce passions, or unjust partialities about matter of opinion and ceremony ; or can doe otherwise then detest all factious, harsh, uncharitable and revengefull proceedings, of what nature,

nature, or upon what ground soever; or that he can be so inconsistent with himself, as to approve any thing but what is like himself, that is, Righteousness, Sincerity, and Beneficence.

Lastly, Wisdom attracts the Favour of God, purchaseth a glorious Reward, and secureth perpetual Felicity to us. *For*
Wised. 7. 28. God loveth none but him that dwelleth with
3. 15. wisdom. And, glorious is the fruit of good
labour : and the root of wisdom shall ne-
Prov. 3. 13. ver fall away. And, Happy is the man
8. 35. that findeth wisdom : and, whoso findeth
her, findeth life, and shall obtain favour
of the Lord. These are the words of wise Solomon, in the Book of *Wisdom*, and in the *Proverbs*. God loveth her, as most agreeable to his nature; as resembling him; as an off-spring, beam and efflux of that Wisdom which founded the earth, and established the Heavens; as that which begetteth honour, love, and obedience to his Commands, and truly glorifies him; and as that which promotes the good of his Creatures, which he earnestly desires. And the paths she leads in are such as directly tend to the promised Inheritance of joy and bliss.

Thus

Thus have I simply and plainly presented you with part of what my meditation suggested upon this Subject : It remains that we endeavour to obtain this excellent endowment of Soul , by the faithfull exercise of our Reason, carefull observation of things, diligent study of the Divine Law , watchfull reflexion upon our selves, vertuous and religious practice ; but especially , by imploring the Divine influence, the original spring of light, and fountain of all true knowledge, following S. James his advice, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth freely.* Therefore , O everlasting Wisdom ; the Maker, Redeemer and Governour of all things, let some comfortable Beams from thy great Body of heavenly Light descend upon us, to illuminate our dark minds, and quicken our dead hearts ; to enflame us with ardent love unto thee, and to direct our steps in obedience to thy Laws, through the gloomy shades of this world, into that region of eternal light and bliss , where thou reignest in perfect Glory and Majesty , one God ever-Blessed, world without end.

Amen.

D

The



The Second Sermon.

I TIM. 4. 8.

—*But Godliness is profitable for all things.*

HOW generally men, with most unanimous consent, are devoted to Profit, as to the immediate scope of their designs, and aim of their doings, if with the slightest attention we view what is acted upon this Theatre of humane affairs, we cannot but discern. All that we see men so very serious and industrious about, which we call business; that which they trudge for in the Streets, which they work or wait for in the Shops, which they meet and croud for at the Exchange, which they sue for in the Hall, and solicit for at the Court, which they plow and digg for, which they march and fight for in the Field, which they travel for at Land, and sail for (among rocks and storms)

Prov. 14. 23.

Φέρω, ὅς ἐβό-
λῳ ὡς μέγα
δύναμιον παν-
ταχῶ; Ari-
stoph. Plut.

storms) upon the Sea, which they plod for in the Closet, and dispute for in the Schools, (yea, may we not adde, which they frequently pray for, and preach for in the Church?) what is it but Profit ? Is it not this apparently for which men so eagerly contest and quarrel, so bitterly envy and emulate, so fiercely clamour and inveigh, so cunningly supplant and undermine one another ; which stuffeth their Hearts with mutual hatred and spite, which tippeth their Tongues with slander and reproach, which often embrotheth their Hands with blood and slaughter ; for which they expose their Lives and Limbs to danger , for which they undergoe grievous Toils and Drudgeries , for which they distract their Mind with Cares, and *pierce their heart with sorrows* ; to which they sacrifice their present Ease and Content, yea, to which commonly they prostitute their Honour and Conscience ? This, if you mark it, is the great Mistress, which is with so passionate rivalry everywhere wooed and courted ; this the common Mark which all eyes aim, and all endeavours strike at ; this the Hire which men demand for all their Pains , the Prize they hope for all their Combats,

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*Prima ferè
vota, &
cunctis no-
tissima
Templi
Divitiæ ut
crescant,
&c. Juv.
Sat. 10.*

*Omnes ad af-
fectum atque
appetitum u-
tilitatis sua
naturæ ipsius
magisterio at-
que impulsio-
ne ducuntur.
Salv. ad Eccl.
Cath. 2.*

bats, the Harvest they seek from all the year's assiduous Labour. This is the Bait, by which you may inveigle most men any-whither; and the most certain sign, by which you may prognosticate what any man will doe: for mark where his Profit is, there will he be. This some professedly and with open face, others slyly and under thin veils of pretence; (under guise of friendship, of love to publick good, of loyalty, of religious zeal;) some directly and in a plain track, others obliquely and by subtle trains; some by sordid and base means, others in ways more cleanly and plausible; some gravely and modestly, others wildly and furiously; all (very few excepted) in one manner or another, do clearly in most of their proceedings level and drive at.

This practice then being so general, and seeing that men are reasonable creatures, that it is so cannot surely proceed from meer brutishness, or dotage; there must be some fair colour or semblance of reason, which draweth men into, and carrieth them forward in this way. The reason indeed is obvious and evident enough, the very name of Profit implieth it, signifying that which is usefull,

full, or conducive to purposes really or seemingly good. The gain of mony, or of somewhat equivalent thereto, is therefore specially termed Profit, because it readily supplieth necessity, furnisheth convenience, feedeth pleasure, satisfieth fancy and curiosity, promoteth ease and liberty, supporteth honour and dignity, procureth power, dependencies, and friendships, rendereth a man some-body, considerable in the world; in fine, enableth to doe good, or to perform works of beneficence and charity. Profit is therefore so much affected and pursued, because it is, or doth seem, apt to procure or promote some good desirable to us.

If therefore a Project should be proposed to us very fecible and probable to succeed, in pursuance whereof assuredly we might obtain great Profit; methinks, in consistence with our selves, and conformably to our usual manner of acting, we should be very ready to embrace and execute it. Such a Project it is which in my Text, by a very trusty Voucher, and skilfull Judge of such things, and one who had himself fully experimented it, is proposed; which in it self is very practicable, so that any of

us may, if we have a mind to it, and will be at the pains, throughly compass and carry it on; which will exceedingly turn to account, and bring in Gains unto us unspeakably vast; in comparison whereto all other designs, which men with so much care and toil do pursue, are very unprofitable or detrimental, yielding but shadows of profit, or bringing real dammage to us.

It is briefly this, to be religious or pious; that is, in our minds stedfastly to believe on God, (such as nature in some measure, and revelation more clearly declareth him,) in our hearts earnestly to love and reverence him, through all our practice sincerely and diligently to observe his Laws. This is it which Saint *Paul* affirmeth to be *profitable for all things*, and which it is my intent, by God's help, to recommend unto you as such; demonstrating it really to be so, by representing some of those numberless benefits and advantages which accrue from it, extending to all conditions and capacities of men, to all states, all seasons, and in effect to all affairs of life.

It hath been ever a main obstruction to the practice of Piety, that it hath
been

been taken for no friend, or rather for an enemy, to Profit ; as both unprofitable and prejudicial to its followers : and many semblances there are countenancing that opinion. For Religion seemeth to smother or to slacken the industry and alacrity of men in following Profit, many ways: by charging them to be content with a little, and carefull for nothing ; by diverting their affections and cares from worldly affairs to matters of another nature, place, and time, prescribing in the first place to seek things spiritual, heavenly, and future ; by disparaging all secular wealth, as a thing, in comparision to Vertue and spiritual goods, very mean and inconsiderable ; by checking greedy desires and aspiring thoughts after it ; by debarring the most ready ways of getting it, (violence, exaction, fraud, and flattery,) yea, streightning the best ways, eager care and diligence ; by commending strict Justice in all cases, and always taking part with Conscience when it clasheth with Interest ; by paring away the largest uses of Wealth, in the prohibition of its free enjoyment to pride or pleasure ; by injoyning liberal communication thereof in ways of charity and

D 4 mercy ;

The Second Sermon.

mercy ; by engaging men to expose their goods sometimes to imminent hazard, sometimes to certain loss ; obliging them to forsake all things, and to embrace Poverty for its sake.

It favoureth this conceit, to observe, that often bad men by impious courses do appear to thrive and prosper ; while good men seem for their goodness to suffer , or to be no wise visibly better for it, enduring much hardship and distress.

Mal. 3. 14.

It furthereth the prejudice, that some persons, void of true Piety, or imperfectly good, (some *Dabblers* in Religion,) do not from their lame, slight and superficial performances feel satisfactory returns, such as they did presume to find ; and thence, to the defamation of Piety, are apt to say, with those men in the Prophet, *It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts ?* Yea, that sometimes very pious men, being out of humour, and somewhat discomposed by the urgent pressures of affliction, the disappointments and crosses incident to all men here in this region of trouble, are apt to complain, and express themselves dis-

The Second Sermon.

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dissatisfied, saying with Job, *It profiteth a man nothing, that he should delight himself with God. What advantage will it be unto me, and what profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin? or, with David, Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency; For all the day long I have been plagued, and chastened every morning.* Job 34. 9. 35. 3. Psal. 73. 13, 14.

To these considerations, disadvantageous in this respect to Piety, may be added, that the constant and certain profits emergent from it (although incomparably more substantial, and to the mind more sensible than any other) are not yet so gross and palpable, that men, who from being immersed in earth and flesh are blind in error, dull of apprehension, vain and inconsiderate in their judgments, tainted and vitiated in their palates, can discern their worth, or relish their sweetness. Hence it is, that so many follow the judgment and practice of those in Job, who say unto God, *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?* Job 21. 14, 15.

For voiding which prejudices, and the recommendation of S. Paul's project,
I shall

I shall (as I said) propose some of those innumerable advantages, by considering which the immense profitableness of Piety will appear. And first, I shall mention those Considerations which more plainly do import Universality; then shall touch some Benefits thereof, seeming more particular, yet in effect vastly large, and of a very diffusive influence.

I. First then we may consider, that Piety is exceeding usefull for all sorts of men, in all capacities, all states, all relations; fitting and disposing them to manage all their respective concernments, to discharge all their peculiar duties, in a proper, just and decent manner.

Eph. 6. 9.
Col. 4. 1.

It rendreth all Superiours equal and moderate in their administrations; mild, courteous and affable in their converse; benign and condescensive in all their demeanour toward their Inferiours.

Eph. 6. 5.
Col. 3. 22.
1 Pet. 2. 18.

Correspondently it disposeth Inferiours to be sincere and faithfull, modest, loving, respectfull, diligent, apt willingly to yield due subjection and service.

It inclineth Princes to be just, gentle, benign, carefull for their Subjects good, apt to administer Justice uprightly, to pro-

protect Right, to encourage Vertue, to check Wickedness.

Answerably it rendreth Subjects loyal, submissive, obedient, quiet and peaceable, ready to yield due Honour, to pay the Tributes and bear the Burthens imposed, to discharge all Duties, and observe all Laws prescribed by their Governours conscionably, patiently, chearfully, without reluctancy, grudging, or murmuring.

Rom. 13. 1.
Tit. 3. 1.
1 Pet. 2. 13.

1 Pet. 4. 9.
Phil. 2. 14.

It maketh Parents loving, gentle, provident for their Childrens good education, and comfortable subsistence; Children again, dutifull, respectfull, gratefull, apt to requite their Parents.

Eph. 6. 4.
Col. 3. 21.
1 Tim. 5. 8.
Eph. 6. 1.
Col. 3. 20.

Husbands from it become affectionate and compliant to their Wives; Wives submissive and obedient to their Husbands.

Eph. 5. 25.
Col. 3. 19.
1 Pet. 3. 7.
Eph. 5. 22.
Col. 3. 18.
Tit. 2. 5.
1 Pet. 3. 5.

It disposeth Friends to be Friends indeed, full of cordial affection and good will, entirely faithfull, firmly constant, industriously carefull and active in performing all good offices mutually.

It engageth men to be diligent in their Calling, faithfull to their Trusts, contented and peaceable in their Station, and thereby serviceable to Publick good.

It

Gal. 6. 2, 10.

Phil. 4. 8.

1 Thes. 3. 12.

2 Cor. 9. 13.

It rendereth all men just and punctual in their Dealing, orderly and quiet in their Behaviour, courteous and complaisant in their Conversation, friendly and charitable upon all occasions, apt to assist, to relieve, to comfort one another.

It tieth all Relations more fastly and strongly, assureth and augmenteth all Endearments, enforceth and establissheth all Obligations by the firm bands of Conscience; set aside which, no Engagement can hold sure against temptations of Interest, or Pleasure. Much difference there is between performing these Duties out of natural temper, fear of punishment, hope of temporal reward, selfish design, regard to credit, or other the like Principles, and the discharging them out of religious Conscience: this alone will keep men tight, uniform, resolute and stable; whereas all other Principles are loose and slippery, will soon be shaken and faulter.

In consequence to those Practices springing from it, Piety removeth oppression, violence, faction, disorders and murmurings, out of the State; schisms and scandals out of the Church; pride and haughtiness, sloth and luxury, detraction and sycophantry, out of the Court;

Court ; corruption and partiality out of Judicatures ; clamours and tumults out of the Street ; brawlings, grudges and jealousies out of Families ; extortion and cozenage out of Trade ; strifes, emulations, slanderous backbitings, bitter and foul language, out of Conversation : in all places, in all Societies it produceth, it advanceth, it establisheth order, peace, safety, prosperity, all that is good, all that is lovely or handsome, all that is convenient or pleasant for humane society, and common life. It is that which (as the *Wise man* saith) ex-
alteth a nation ; it is that which es-
tablisseth a throne.

Prov. 14. 34.
 & 16. 12. &
 20. 28. & 29.
 14. & 8. 15.
 & 29. 8. .

It is indeed the best prop and guard that can be of Government, and of the Commonweal : for it settleth the Body politick in a sound constitution of health, it firmly cementeth the parts thereof ; it putteth all things into a right order, and steddy course. It procureth mutual respect and affection between Governours and Subjects, whence ariseth safety, ease and pleasure to both. It rendreth men truly good, (that is, just and honest, sober and considerate, modest and peaceable,) and thence apt, without any constraint or stir, to yield
 every

every one their due ; not affected to needless change , not disposed to raise any disturbance. It putteth men in good humour , and keepeth them in it ; whence things pass smoothly and pleasantly. It cherisheth worth, and encourageth industry ; whence Vertue flourisheth , and Wealth is encreased ; whence the occasions and means of disorder are stopt , the pretences for sedition and faction are cut off. In fine, it certainly procureth the benediction of God, the source of all welfare and pro-

Prov. 11. 10. sperity : whence, *When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth*; and,

Prov. 29. 2. *When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice*, saith the great Politician, Solomon.

It is therefore the concernment of all men , who (as the Psalmist speaketh) *desire to live well , and would fain see good days* ; it is the special interest of great Persons, (of the Magistracy, the Nobility, the Gentry, of all persons that have any considerable interest in the world,) who would safely and sweetly enjoy their dignity, power, or wealth, by all means to protect and promote Piety, as the best instrument of their security, and undisturbedly enjoying the accom-

accommodations of their state. 'Tis in all respects their best wisdom and policy ; that which will as well preserve their outward state here, as satisfy their Consciences within, and save their Souls hereafter. All the *Machiavilian* arts and tricks, all the sleights and fetches of worldly craft do signifie nothing, in comparison to this one plain and easie way of securing and furthering their Interests.

If then it be a gross absurdity to desire the fruits, and not to take care of the root, not to cultivate the stock, whence they sprout ; if every Prince gladly would have his Subjects loyal and obedient, every Master would have his Servants honest, diligent and observant, every Parent would have his Children officious and gratefull, every man would have his Friend faithfull and kind, every one would have those just and sincere with whom he doth negotiate or converse ; if any one would chuse to be related to such, and would esteem their relation a happiness : then consequently should every man in reason strive to further Piety, from whence alone those good dispositions and practices do proceed.

II. Pi-

II. Piety doth fit a man for all conditions, qualifying him to pass through them all with the best advantage, wisely, chearfully and safely ; so as to incur no considerable harm or detriment by them.

Is a man prosperous, high, or wealthy in condition ? Piety guardeth him from all the mischiefs incident to that state, and disposeth him to enjoy the best advantages thereof. It keepeth him from being swelled and puffed up with vain conceit, from being transported with fond complacence or confidence therein ; minding him, that it is purely the gift of God, that it absolutely dependeth on his disposall, so that it may soon be taken from him, and that he cannot otherwise then by humility, by gratitude, by the good use of it, be secure to retain it ; minding him also, that he shall assuredly be forced to render a strict account concerning the good management thereof. It preserveth him from being perverted or corrupted with the temptations to which that condition is most liable ; from luxury, from sloth, from stupidity, from forgetfulness of God, and of himself ; maintaining among the floods of plenty a sober and
steady

steddy mind. It fenceth him from insolence, and fastuous contempt of others; rendereth him civil, condescensive, kind and helpfull to those who are in a meanner state. It instructeth and inciteth him to apply his wealth and power to the best uses, to the Service of God, to the benefit of his Neighbour, for his own best reputation, and most solid comfort. It is the right balast of prosperity, the onely antidote for all the inconveniences of wealth; that which secureth, sweetneth and sanctifieth all other goods: without it all apparent goods are very noxious, or extremely dangerous; riches, power, honour, ease, pleasure, are so many poisons, or so many snares, without it. Again, is a man poor and low in the world? Piety doth improve and sweeten even that state: it keepeth his spirits up above dejection, desperation, and disconsolateness; it freeth him from all grievous solicitude and anxiety; shewing him, that although he seemeth to have little, yet he may be assured to want nothing, he having a certain succour and never-failing supply from God's good Providence; that notwithstanding the present streightness of his condition, or scantness of outward

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things, he hath a title to Goods infinitely more precious and more considerable. A pious man cannot but apprehend himself like the Child of a most wealthy, kind and carefull Father, who although he hath yet nothing in his own possession, or passing under his name, yet is assured that he can never come into any want of what is needfull to him: the Lord of all things (who hath all things in Heaven and Earth at his disposal, who is infinitely tender of his Childrens good, who doth incessantly watch over them) being his gracious Father, how can he fear to be left destitute, or not to be competently provided for, as is truly best for him?

This is the difference between a pious, and an impious man. Is the pious man in need? he hath then an invisible refuge to fly to, an invisible store to furnish him; he hath somewhat beyond all present things to hope in, to comfort himself with: whereas the impious person hath nothing beside present appearances to support or solace himself by; the which failing, down he sinketh into dejection and despair. Is the good man in affliction? he knoweth that it cometh not on him without God's wise appointment, nor without good intention

on toward him, for probation, exercise and improvement of his Vertues, or for wholesome correction of his bad dispositions ; that it is onely Physick and Discipline to him, which shall have a comfortable issue ; that it shall last no longer then it is expedient for him that it should : wherefore he patiently submitteth to it, and undergoeth it chearfully, with the same mind wherewith a Patient swalloweth down an unsavoury Potion, which he presumeth will conduce to his Health. Never, indeed, hath any man enjoyed more real content, or hath been more truly satisfied, then good men have been in a seeming depth of adversity. What men ever upon earth have been more sorely afflicted, have underwent greater losses, disgraces, labours, troubles, distresses in any kind, then did the H. Apostles? yet did they most heartily rejoyce, exult and triumph in them all. Such a wondrous virtue hath Piety to change all things into matter of consolation and joy. No

Scimus amicos Dei ab amantissimo, misericordissimo Patre Deo mala ista poenalia recipere, non ut poenam seu vindictam iracundiae, sed magis ut correctiones & medicamenta stultitiae, & adjuncta virtutis, ut malleationes, sive fabricationes, & tunsiones, sive ablutiones, & candidationes. Guil. Par. de Sacram.

Ἐκείνοι μὲν γὰρ ἐπικύριζον ἢ χαρὰς τῇ μαρτυρίᾳ, καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς τῇ ἐπισημασίᾳ, καὶ ἡ πρὸς τὴν κρίσιν ἀγάπη, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ πατερικόν.
Euseb. 5. 1. Mart. Lugd.

condition in effect can be evil or sad to a pious man: his very sorrows are pleasant, his infirmities are wholesome, his wants enrich him, his disgraces adorn him, his burthens ease him; his duties are privileges, his falls are the grounds of advancement, his very sins (as breeding contrition, humility, circumspection and vigilance) do better and profit him: whereas Impiety doth spoil every condition, doth corrupt and embase all good things, doth embitter all the conveniencies and comforts of life.

III. Piety doth virtually comprise within it all other profits, serving all the designs of them all: what-ever kind of desirable good we can hope to find from any other profit, we may be assured to enjoy from it.

He that hath it is *ipso facto* vastly rich, is entitled to immense treasures of most precious Wealth; in comparison whereto all the gold and all the jewels in the world are meer baubles. He hath interest in God, and can call him his, who is the *All*, and in regard to whom all things existent are *less then nothing*. The infinite Power and Wisdom of God belong to him, to be ever, upon all fit occasi-

occasions, employed for his benefit. All the inestimable treasures of Heaven (a place infinitely more rich then the *Indies*) are his, after this moment of life, to have and to hold for ever : so that great reason had the *Wise man* to say , that *In the house of the righteous is much treasure.* Prov. 15. 6. Piety therefore is profitable, as immediately instating in wealth : and whereas the desired fruits of profit are chiefly these, .honour, power, pleasure, safety, liberty, ease, opportunity of getting knowledge, means of benefitting others ; all these we shall see do abundantly accrue from Piety, and in truth only from it.



The Pious man is in truth most Honourable. *Inter homines pro summo est optimus,* saith *Seneca* ; whom *Solomon* Sen. Ep. 90. tranſlateth thus, *The righteous is more excellent then his neighbour.* Prov. 12. 26. He is dignified by the most illustrious titles, a Son of God, a Friend and Favourite to the Sovereign King of the World, an Heir of Heaven, a Denizon of the *Jerusalem* above : Titles far surpassing all those which worldly state doth assume. He is approved by the best and most infallible judgments, wherein true Honour resideth. He is respected by God himself,

Καθ' ἑαυτὸν
αὐτὸς ὁ ἀγαθὸς
μὲν ὁ πρῶτος.
Aristot. Eth. 3. 3.

by the H. Angels, by the blessed Saints, by all good and all wise persons ; yea, commonly, by all men: for the effects of genuine Piety are so venerable and amiable, that scarce any man can doe otherwise.

Prov. 12. 8, 4. wise then in his heart much esteem him that worketh them.

The Pious man is also the most potent man: he hath a kind of omnipotency, because he can doe what-ever he will, that is, what he ought to doe ; and, because the Divine Power is ever ready to assist him in his pious enterprises, so that

He can doe all things by Christ that strengthneth him. He is able to combat

and vanquish him that is *ὁ ἰσχυρός*, the stout and mighty one ; to wage war with happy success against principalities and

Prov. 16. 32. powers. He conquereth and commandeth himself, which is the bravest victory, and noblest empire: he quellerh

25. 28.
Vide Sen. de
Ben. 5. 7.

fleshly lusts, subdueth inordinate passions, and repelleth strong temptations.

He, by his faith, overcometh the world with a conquest far more glorious then ever any Alexander or Caesar could do. He, in fine, doth perform the most worthy exploits, and deserveth the most honourable triumphs that man can do.

The Pious man also doth enjoy the onely

onely true Pleasures ; hearty, pure, solid, durable Pleasures ; such Pleasures as those of which the divine Psalmist singeth, *In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for ever more.* That all joy in believing, that gayety of hope, that incessant rejoicing in the Lord, and greatly delighting in his Law, that continual feast of a good Conscience, that serving the Lord with gladness, that exceeding gladness with God's countenance, that comfort of the Holy Spirit, that joy unspeakable and full of glory ; the satisfaction resulting from the contemplation of Heavenly truth, from the sense of God's favour, and the pardon of his sins, from the influence of God's grace, from the hopes and anticipation of everlasting bliss : these are Pleasures indeed, in comparison whereunto all other pleasures are no more then brutish sensualitys, sordid impurities, superficial touches, transient flashes of delight ; such as should be insipid and unsavoury to a rational appetite ; such as are tinctured with sourness and bitterness, have painfull remorse or qualms

Psal. 16. 11.
Rom. 15. 13.
Heb. 3. 6.
Phil. 4. 4.
Psal. 43. 4.
Psal. 112. 1.
& 1. 2. &
119. 16, 24,
47, 70, 77,
92, 143, 111.
Psal. 100. 2.
& 21. 6. &
94. 19.
Ila. 29. 19.
Joh. 16. 20,
&c.
1 Pet. 1. 8.
Rom. 14. 17.

Quid enim jucundius, quam Dei Patris & Domini reconciliatio, quam veritatis revelatio, quam errorum recognitio, quam tot retrò criminum venia? quæ major voluptas, quam fastidium ipsius voluptatis, quam seculi totius contemptus, quam vera libertas, quam conscientia integra, quam vita sufficiens, quam mortis timor nullus, &c?
Tert. de Spectac. 29.

consequent. All the Pious man's performances of duty and of devotion are full of pure satisfaction and delight here, they shall be rewarded with perfect and endless joy hereafter.

As for Safety, the Pious man hath it most absolute and sure; he being guarded by Almighty power and wisdom;

Psal. 17. 8. & 36. 7. & 57. 1. & 61. 4. & 91. 4. resting under the shadow of God's wings; God upholding him with his hand, ordering his steps, so that none of them shall slide, holding his soul in life, and suffering not his feet to be moved; he being, by the grace and mercy of God, secured from the assaults and impressions of all enemies, from sin and guilt, from the Devil, world and flesh, from death and hell, which are our most formidable, and in effect onely dangerous enemies.

Psal. 119. 45. As for Liberty, the Pious man most entirely and truly doth enjoy that: he alone is free from captivity to that cruel Tyrant, *Satan*, from the miserable slavery to Sin, from the grievous dominion of lust and passion. He can doe what he pleaseth, having a mind to doe onely what is good and fit. The Law he observeth is worthily called *the perfect law of liberty*; the Lord he serveth pretendeth

deth onely to command free-men and friends : *Ye are my friends*, said he, *if you doe whatever I command you*; and, *If the Son set you free, then are you free indeed.* Joh. 15. 14. Joh. 8. 36. Οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐ-
κ ἐστὶν ἐ-
λ' δ' ἐστὶν ἐ-
ἀλλ' ἢ μὴ-
ν ὁ Χριστὸς
Chrys.
ad Theod.

And for Ease, 'tis he onely that knoweth it; having his mind exempted from the distraction of care, from disorder of passion, from anguish of Conscience, from the drudgeries and troubles of the world, from the vexations and disquiets which sin produceth. He findeth it made good to him, which our Lord inviting him did promise, *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*: he feeleth the truth of those Divine assertions, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee*; and, *Great peace have they which love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them.* Matt. 11. 28. Isai. 26. 3. Ps. 119. 165.

As for Knowledge, the Pious man alone doth attain it considerably, so as to become truly wise, and learned to purpose. *Evil men* (saith the *Wise man* Prov. 28. 5, himself, who knew well,) *understand not judgment*: but they that seek the Lord *understand all things*. It is the Pious man that employeth his mind upon the most proper and worthy objects, that knoweth things which certainly best deserve

serve to be known, that hath his Soul enriched with the choicest notions: he skilleth to aim at the best ends, and to compass them by the fittest means; he can assign to each thing its due worth and value; he can prosecute things by the best methods, and order his affairs in the best manner: so that he is sure not to be defeated or disappointed in his endeavours, nor to mis-spend his care and pains, without answerable fruit. He hath the best Master to instruct him in his studies, and the best rules to direct him in his proceedings: he cannot be mistaken, seeing in his judgment and choice of things he conspireth with infallible Wisdom. Therefore ὁ δὲ βῶν ἄκρως φιλοσοφεῖ, *the pious man is the exquisite philosopher. The fear of the Lord that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding. The fear of the Lord* (as is said again and again in Scripture) *is the head (or top) of wisdom. A good understanding have all they that keep his commandments.*

Trismeg.

Job 28. 28.

{ Prov. 9. 10.

I. 7.

{ Ps. 111. 10.

Ps. 119 34.

99, 104, 130.

Farther, the Pious man is enabled and disposed (hath the power and the heart) most to benefit and oblige others. He doeth it by his succour and assistance, by his instruction and advice, which he is
ever

ever ready to yield to any man upon fit occasion: he doeth it by the direction and encouragement of his good Example: he doeth it by his constant and earnest Prayers for all men: he doeth it by drawing down Blessings from Heaven on the place where he resideth. He is upon all accounts the most true, the most common benefactour to mankind; all his neighbours, his Country, the World are in some way or other obliged to him: at least, he doeth all the good he can, and in wish doth benefit all men.

Thus all the fruits and consequences of Profit, the which engage men so eagerly to pursue it, do in the best kind and highest degree result from Piety, and, indeed, onely from it. All the Philosophical *Bravado's* concerning a Wise man being onely rich, onely honourable, onely happy, onely above fortune, are verified in the Pious man: to him alone, as such, with a sure foundation, without vanity, with evident reason those Aphorisms may be applied. They are Paradoxes and fictions abstracting from Religion, or considering men onely under the light and power of nature: but supposing our Religion true, a good
Chri-

Christian soberly, without arrogance, in proportion and according to the measure of his Piety, may assume them to himself, as the H. Apostles did; *I possess all things, I can doe all things*, he may in a sort say after S. Paul.

Sen. Ep. 59. As for all other Profits', secluding it, they are but imaginary and counterfeited, meer shadows and illusions, yielding onely painted shews in stead of substantial fruit.

If from bare worldly wealth (that which usurpeth the name of Profit here) a man seeketh Honour, he is deluded, for he is not thereby truly honourable; he is but a shining Earth-worm, a well-trapped Ass, a gaudy Statue, a theatrical Grandee: with God, who judgeth most rightly, he is mean and despicable; no intelligent person can inwardly respect him. Even here (in this World of fallacy and dotage) the wisest and soberest men, whose judgment usually doth sway that of others, cannot but condemn him, as Master of no real good, nor fit for any good purpose; as seeing that in the end he will prove most beggarly and wretched.

If a man affecteth Power thence, he is grievously mistaken; for, in stead there-

thereof, he proveth exceedingly feeble and impotent, able to perform nothing worthy a man, subject to fond humours and passions, servant to divers lusts and pleasures, *captivated by the Devil at his pleasure*, overborn by temptation, hurried by the stream of the World, and liable to the strokes of fortune.

If he propoundeth to himself thence the enjoyment of Pleasure, he will also much fail therein: for in lieu thereof he shall find care and trouble, surfeiting and disease, wearisome satiety and bitter regret; being void of all true delight in his mind, and satisfaction in his Conscience; nothing here being able to furnish solid and stable pleasure.

If he fantasieth Safety, he deludeth himself: for how can he be safe, who is destitute of God's protection and succour; who is the object of Divine wrath and vengeance; who is assailed by many fierce and powerfull enemies; whom the roaring Lion is ready to devour; whom Death and *sudden destruction* are coming to seize upon; whom Guilt threatneth, and Hell gapeth for; who without any guard or fence standeth exposed to such imminent, such horrid and ghastly dangers?

1 Theff. 5. 3.
Prov. 10. 29.

If

August.

Prov. 25. 28.

If he thirst for Liberty, he will be frustrated: for he can be no otherwise then a slave, while he continueth impious; *servus tot dominorum, quot vitiorum, a slave to so many masters as he keepeth vices*; a slave to himself, and his own lusts; carrying about with him the fetters of unsatiable desire, being hampered with inconsistent and irregular affections.

Isa. 57. 20.

Ease he cannot obtain, being oppressed with unwieldy burthens of sin, of care, of trouble; being tossed with restless agitations of lust and passion; being *like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.*

If he meaneth to get Wisdom, he is out; for Wisdom and Impiety are incompatible things. All his knowledge is vain, all his speculations are no better then dreams, seeing he erreth in the main point, and is *not wise to salvation.*

He is, in fine, extremely mistaken, and in all his projects will be lamentably disappointed, whoever fantasieth any true profit without Piety: he never can attain to be so much as wealthy; but drudge and plod what he can, must be a beggar, and a forlorn wretch. For how can he be any wise rich, who doth want
all

all the best things, the onely valuable things in the world, which any man may have, which any good man doth possess? How can he be rich, who is destitute of the most needfull accommodations of life; who constantly feedeth on the courtest and most sordid fare, (the dust of pelf, the dung of sensuality;) who hath no faithfull or constant friends, (nothing earthly can be such;) who is master of nothing but dirt, or chaffe, or smoak? Whereas also Riches do consist, not in what one enjoyeth at present, (for that can be little) but in a presumed ability to enjoy afterward what he may come to need or desire; or in well-grounded hopes that he shall never fall into want or distress. How can that man be rich, who hath not any confidence in God, any interest in him, any reason to expect his Blessing? yea, who hath much ground to fear the displeasure of him, in whose hand all things are, and who arbitrarily disposeth of all? Piety therefore is the onely profitable thing, according to just esteem. *She is more* Prov. 3. 15. *precious then rubies, and all the things we can desire are not to be compared to her.* Upon this accompt it is most true, what the Psalmist affirmeth, *A little that the* Psal. 37. 16. *righ-*

*righteous hath, is better then great riches
of the ungodly.*

IV. That Commendation is not to be omitted which is nearest at hand, and suggested by S. Paul himself to back this assertion concerning the universal profitableness of Piety; *For (saith he) it hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come:* that is, God hath promised to reward it with Blessings appertaining to this mortal life, and with those which concern the future eternal state.

As for the Blessings of this life, although God hath not promised to load the godly man with affluence of worldly things, not to put him into a splendid and pompous garb, not to dispense to him that which may serve for pampering the flesh, or gratifying wanton fancy, not to exempt him from all the inconveniencies to which humane nature and this worldly state are subject; yet hath he promised to furnish him with what-ever is needfull or convenient for him, in due measure and season, the which he doth best understand. There is no good thing which a man naturally desireth, or reasonably can wish for, which
is

is not in exprefs terms propofed as a reward, or a result of Piety.

In general, it is declared, that *Blessings are upon the head of the juſt*; that, *No good thing God will uphold from them that walk uprightly*; that, what-ever otherwiſe doth fall out, it *affuredly ſhall be well with them that fear God*; that, *Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord*, that *walketh in his ways*: —happy ſhalt thou be, and it ſhall be well with thee; that, *There ſhall no evil happen to the juſt*; that, *All things work together for good to them that love God*.

Prov. 10. 6.
Deut. 28. 8.
30. 9.
Pſal. 84. 11.
Eccles 8. 12.
Iſa. 3. 10.
Pſ. 128. 1, 2.
(Prov. 8. 35.)

Particularly, there are promiſed to the Pious man,

A Supply of all Wants. *The Lord will not ſuffer the ſoul of the righteous to fa- miſh. The righteous eateth to the ſatisfy- ing of his ſoul. There is no want to them that fear God. The young Lions do lack, and ſuffer hunger; but they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing.*

Prov. 10. 3.
Prov. 13. 25.
Pſ. 34. 9, 10.
& 33. 19. &
37. 3, 19.

A Protection in all Dangers. *The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to de- liver their ſoul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. There ſhall no evil befall thee, neither ſhall any plague come nigh thy dwelling: He ſhall give his An-*

Pſal. 33. 18.
& 34. 20. &
112. 7. & 37.
28.

Pſ. 91. 10, 11.

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gels

gels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways.

Guidance in all his Undertakings and proceedings. *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord—none of his steps shall slide. —In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy path.*

Success and prosperity in his Designs.

Psalm 37. 5. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.

Psalm 1. 3. —Whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper.

Job 22. 28. —Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established; and the light shall shine upon thy ways. The Lord shall command a blessing upon thee in thy store-houses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto.

Deut. 28. 8. 12. —Thine expectation shall not be cut off.

Comfortable enjoying the fruits of his industry. *—Thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands.—*

Satisfaction of all reasonable Desires.

Prov. 10. 24. The desire of the righteous shall be granted.

Psalm 37. 4. Delight thy self in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he will hear their cry, and will save them.

Firm Peace and quiet. *The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. Great peace have they which love*

love thy Law. The fruit of righteousness Jam. 3. 18.
is sowed in peace.

Joy and alacrity. Light is sown for Psal. 97. 11.
the righteous, and gladness for the upright
in heart. In the transgression of an evil Prov. 29. 6.
man there is a snare : but the righteous
doth sing and rejoice.

Support and comfort in afflictions.
He healeth the broken in heart, and bin- Psal. 147. 3.
deth up their wounds. Be of good courage, Psal. 37. 24.
and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye 27. 14.
that hope in the Lord.

Deliverance from trouble. Many are Psal. 34. 19.
the afflictions of the righteous, but the
Lord delivereth him out of all. He kee- Psal. 37. 39.
peth all his bones, not one of them is bro-
ken.

Preservation and recovery from mis-
haps, or miscarriages. Though he fall, Psal. 37. 24.
he shall not be utterly cast down : for the
Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

Preferment of all sorts, to honour
and dignity, to wealth and prosperity.
Wait upon the Lord, and keep his way; Psal. 37. 34.
and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land.
By humility and fear of the Lord are Prov. 22. 4.
riches and honour. Blessed is the man that Psal. 112. 1, 3.
feareth the Lord,—wealth and riches are
in his house. The upright shall have good Prov. 28. 10.
things in possession. If they obey and serve (Job 35. 7.)
Job 36. 11.

him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasure. The tabernacle of the righteous shall flourish.

Prov. 10. 27. Long life. The fear of the Lord pro-
9. 11. longeth days. By me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be

Prov. 3. 1, 2, encreased. Let thine heart keep my com-
16. mandments: For length of days, and long life, and peace shall they adde unto thee.

A Good name enduring after death.

Prov. 10. 7. The memory of the just is blessed.

25. Blessings entailed on posterity. His
Psal. 37. 26. seed shall be mighty upon earth; the ge-
112. 2. (Exo. 20. 6.) neration of the upright shall be blessed.

Prov. 12. 3. The root of the righteous shall not be moved.

Thus is a liberal dispensation even of temporal goods annexed by God's infallible Word unto the practice of Piety. It is indeed more frequently, abundantly and explicitly promised unto God's ancient People, as being a conditional ingredient of the Covenant made with them, exhibited in that as a recompence to their external performance of Religious works prescribed in their Law. The Gospel doth not so clearly propound it, or so much insist upon it, as not principally

Prov. 11. 31.
Dent. 28. 1.
& 7. 12. &
11. 13.

pally belonging to the Evangelical Covenant, the which, in reward to the performance of its conditions by us, peculiarly doth offer Blessings Spiritual, and relating to the future state; as also scarce deserving to be mentioned in comparison to those superiour Blessings. Yet as the celestial Benefits, although not openly tendered in the *Jewish* Law, were yet mystically couched therein, and closely designed for the spiritual and hearty Practisers of Religion; so is the collation of temporal accommodations to be understood to belong to all pious Christians: there is a *Codicill* (as it were) annexed to the New Testament, in the which God signifieth his intention to furnish his Children with all that is needfull or convenient for them. His Providence hath not ceased to watch over us, his Bounty doth not fail toward us even in this respect; his Care will not be wanting to feed us and cloath us comfortably, to protect us from evil, to prosper our good undertakings. Hence doth he command us to care for nothing, but to cast our care upon him, to recommend our business to him, because he careth for us, he will never forsake us; he will hear our Prayers, and

2 Cor. 4. 17.

Rom. 8. 18.

1 Pet. 5. 7.

Phil. 4. 6.

Heb. 13. 5.

Matt. 6. 25.

- 1 Tim. 6. 17. help us. Hence we are enjoined *not to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.* Hence it is said, that *The divine power hath given us all things pertaining unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and vertue.* Hence it is promised by our
- Matt. 6. 33. Lord, that *If we seek first the Kingdom of God, all things shall be added to us.* Hence it is inferred as consequential to the nature of the Evangelical dispensation, that we cannot want any good thing; He (saith S. Paul,) *that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* In fine, hence it is proposed as notorious, that nothing is permitted to fall out otherwise then as
- Rom. 8. 32. conduceth to our good. *We know (saith S. Paul) that all things work together for*
- Rom. 8. 28. *good unto those that love God:* Nor will
- 1 Cor. 10. 13. *God, in any case, suffer us to be tempted, by any want or pressure, beyond what we are able to bear.* Thus is Piety evidently profitable, as *having the promises of this life, or exhibiting all temporal blessings desirable to the practisers thereof.*

But infinitely more profitable it is as *having the promises of the future life, or*

as procuring a title to those incomparably more excellent Blessings of the other world; those *indefectible treasures*; Luk. 12. 33. that *incorruptible, undefiled, and never-fading inheritance, reserved in heaven for us*; that *exceeding weight of glory*; those *ineffable joys of Paradise*, that lightsome Countenance and beatifying Presence of God; that unconceivably and unexpressably joyfull, glorious, perfect and endless Bliss; briefly, all that is comprised and intimated in those words of the Apostle, *Ey hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* Infinitely profitable surely must that be which procureth those things for us: and in these respects great reason had S. Paul to say, that *Godliness is profitable for all things.*

But farther to evidence and recommend this point, I might propound certain peculiar Advantages arising from Piety, which have a very general influence upon our lives, and do afford unto them exceeding benefit: but this I must, in regard to the time and your patience, at present forbear.



The Third Sermon.

I TIM. 4. 8.

— *But Godliness is profitable for all things.*

IN discoursing formerly upon these words, I did propound divers general Considerations, serving to confirm and recommend this Assertion of *S. Paul*. I shall now insist upon some others more particular, which yet seem much conducive to the same purpose, declaring the vast Utility of Religion or Piety.

I. We may consider, that Religion doth prescribe the truest and best Rules of action; thence enlightning our mind, and rectifying our practice in all matters, and upon all occasions, so that what-ever is performed according to it, is done well and wisely, with a comely grace in regard to others, with a chearfull

full satisfaction in our own mind, with the best assurance, that things are here capable of, to find happy success and beneficial fruit.

Of all things in the world there is nothing more generally profitable than Light: by it we converse with the world, and have all things set before us; by it we truly and easily discern things in their right magnitude, shape, and colour; by it we guide our steps safely in prosecution of what is good, and shunning what is noxious; by it our spirits are comfortably warmed and cheered, our life consequently, our health, our vigour and activity are preserved. The like benefits doth Religion, which is the Light of our Soul, yield to it. Pious men are *children of the light*; Pious works are works of *light shining before men*. God's word (or true Religion) is a *lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path*; enabling us to perceive things, and judge rightly of them; teaching us to walk straightly and surely, without erring or stumbling; qualifying us to embrace what is useful, and to avoid hurtful things; preserving our spiritual life, and disposing us to act well with a vigorous alacrity: with,

Luk. 16. 8.
Eph. 5. 8.
1 Thess. 5. 5.
Joh. 12. 36.
Matt. 5. 16.
Eph. 5. 11.
Ps. 119. 105.

without it a man is stark blind, and utterly benighted, *gropeth* in doubt, wandreth in mistake, trippeth upon all occasions, and often falleth into mischief. *The path of the just* (saith the *Wise man*) *is as the shining light*—*The way of the wicked is as darkness*, they know not at what they stumble. Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way; but wickedness overthroweth the sinner.

If. 59. 10.
Job 5. 14.
Deut. 28. 29.
Prov. 4. 18,
19.
Prov. 13. 6.
& 11. 3, 5.

* *Via eunti
aliquid ex-
tremum est;
error immen-
sus est.* Sen.
Ep. 16.

Again, it is a fair ornament of a man, and a grand convenience both to himself, and to others with whom he converseth or dealeth, to act regularly, uniformly, and consistently; freeing a man's self from distraction and irresolution in his mind, from change and confusion in his proceedings; securing others from delusion and disappointment in their transactions with him. * Even a bad rule constantly observed is therefore better than none: order and perseverance in any way seemeth more convenient, than roving and tossing about in uncertainties. But, secluding a regard to the Precepts of Religion, there can hardly be any sure or settled rule, which firmly can engage a man to, or effectually restrain a man from any thing.

There is scarce in nature any thing so wild,

wild, so intractable, so unintelligible, as a man who hath no bridle of Conscience to guide or check him. A profane man is like a Ship, without Anchor to stay him, or Rudder to steer him, or Compass to guide him; so that he is tost with any wind, and driven with any wave none knoweth whither; whether bodily temper doth sway him, or passion doth hurry him, or interest doth pull him, or example leadeth him, or company inveigleth and haleth him, or humour transporteth him; whither any such variable and unaccountable causes determine him, or divers of them together distract him: whence he so rambleth and hovereth, that he can seldom himself tell what in any case he should doe, nor can another guess it; so that you cannot at any time know where to find him, or how to deal with him; you cannot with reason ever rely upon him, so *unstable he is in all his ways*. He is in effect a meer Child, all humour and giddiness, somewhat worse then a Beast, which, following the instinct of its nature, is constant and regular, and thence tractable; or at least so untractable, that no man will be deceived in meddling with him.

Nothing

Nihil est tam occupatum, tam multiforme, tot ac tam variis affectibus concisum atque laceratum, quàm mala mens. Quint. 12. 1.

Nothing therefore can be more unmanly then such a person, nothing can be more unpleasant then to have to doe with him.

Οἱ ἐμπεικῆς
ἐαυτοῖς ὁμο-
νοῦσι καὶ ἀλλή-
λοις, ἐπὶ ᾧ
αὐτῷ ὄντας,
ὡς εἰπεῖν· ὅ
ποῖόντων μὲν
ἴδ' τὰ βελή-
ματα, καὶ ἔ-
μελαρρεῖ,
ὥσπερ εὐει-
πεῖ.
Arist. Eth.
9. 6.

But a Pious man, being steddily governed by Conscience, and a regard to certain Principles, doth both understand himself, and is intelligible to others: he presently descrieth what in any case he is to doe, and can render an account of his acting: you may know him clearly, and assuredly tell what he will doe, and may therefore fully confide in him.

What therefore Law and Government are to the publick, things necessary to preserve the world in order, peace and safety, (that men may know what to doe, and distinguish what is their own,) that is Piety to each man's private state, and to ordinary conversation: it freeth a man's own life from disorder and distraction; it prompteth men how to behave themselves toward one another with security and confidence.

This it doth by confining our practice within settled bounds: but this advantage appeareth greater, considering that

that the Rules which it prescribeth are the best that can be. Such they must needs be, as proceeding from infallible Wisdom and immense Goodness; being indeed no other, then Laws which the All-wise and most gracious Lord and Maker of the world, out of tender kindness to his subjects and creatures, with especial regard to our welfare, hath been pleased to enact and declare. What of old he said to the *Israelites*, concerning their Laws, may with greater advantage be applied to those which should regulate our lives; *And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, ^{Deut. 10. 12;} ^{13.} but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul; To keep the Commandments of the Lord, and his Statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? (For thy good, that was the design of their being commanded, thereto the observance of them did tend.) And that commendation which by the *Levites* in *Nehemiah* is given to that, doth more clearly and fully agree to the Christian (general and perfect) institution: *Thou ^{Neh. 9. 13.} camest down from mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them**

them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments. And,
 Rom. 7. 12. *The Law (saith the Apostle Paul) is holy, the commandment is holy, just, and good: as such it is recommended to us by its Authour, so we Christians are by many great Arguments assured that it is, and that it is such even our natural reason dictateth; so (as to the chief instances thereof) the most wise and sober men always have acknowledged, so the general consent doth avow, and so even common experience doth attest. For, heartily to love and reverence the Maker of all things, who by every thing apparent before us demonstrateth himself incomprehensibly powerfull, wise, and good, to be kind and charitable to our neighbours, to be just and faithfull in our dealings, to be sober and modest in our minds, to be meek and gentle in our demeanours, to be staunch and temperate in our enjoyments, and the like principal rules of duty, are such, that the common reason of men and continual experience do approve them, as hugely conducive to the publick good of men, and to each man's private welfare. So notoriously beneficial they appear, that for the justification of them*
 we

we might appeal even to the judgment and conscience of those persons who are most concerned to derogate from them. For hardly can any man be so senseless or so lewd, as seriously to disapprove or condemn them, as inwardly to blame or slight those who truly act according to them. The Will of men sometimes may be so depraved, that dissolute persons wantonly and heedlessly may scoff at, and seem to disparage goodness; that good men by very bad men for doing well may be envied and hated: (their being so treated is commonly an argument of the goodness of their persons and of their ways:) but the Understanding of men can hardly be so corrupted, that Piety, Charity, Justice, Temperance, Meekness can in good earnest considerately by any man be disallowed, or that persons apparently practising them can be despised; but rather, in spite of all contrary prejudices and disaffections, such things and such persons cannot but in judgment and heart be esteemed by all men. The lustre of them by a natural and necessary efficacy (like that of Heaven's glorious light) dazzleth the sight, and charmeth the spirits of all men living; the beauty of them irresistibly conquereth and commandeth
in

in the apprehensions of men : the more they are observed, the more usefull and needfull they appear for the good of men ; all the fruits which grow from the observance of them being to all mens taste very pleasant, to all mens experience very wholesome. Indeed, all the good whereby common life is adorned, is sweetned, is rendred pleasant and desirable, doth spring thence ; all the mischiefs which infest particular men, and which disturb the world, palpably do arise from the transgression or neglect thereof.

If we look on a person sticking to those Rules, we shall perceive him to have a chearfull mind and composed passions, to be at peace within and satisfied with himself ; to live in comely order, in good repute, in fair correspondence and firm concord with his neighbours. If we mark what preserveth the body sound and lusty, what keepeth the mind vigorous and brisk, what saveth and improveth the estate, what upholdeth the good name, what guardeth and graceth a man's whole life ; it is nothing else but proceeding in our demeanour and dealings according to the honest and wise Rules of Piety. If we
view

view a place where these commonly in good measure are observed, we shall discern, that Peace and Prosperity do flourish there; that all things proceed on sweetly and fairly; that men generally drive on conversation and commerce together contentedly, delightfully, advantageously, yielding friendly advice and aid mutually, striving to render one another happy; that few clamours or complaints are heard there, few contentions or stirrs do appear, few disasters or tragedies do occur; that such a place hath indeed much of the face, much of the substance of Paradise.

But if you mind a person who neglecteth them, you will find his mind galled with sore remorse, racked with anxious fears and doubts, agitated with storms of passion and lust, living in disorder and disgrace, jarring with others, and no less dissatisfied with himself. If you observe what doth impair the health, doth weaken and fret the mind, doth waste the estate, doth blemish the reputation, doth expose the whole life to danger and trouble; what is it but thwarting these good Rules? If you consider a place where these are much neglected, it will appear like a wilderness

of savage Beasts, or a sty of foul Swine, or a hell of cursed Fiends ; full of roaring and tearing, of factions and feuds, of distractions and confusions, of pitifull objects, of dolefull moans, of tragical events. Men are there wallowing in filth, wildly revelling, bickering and squabbling, defaming, circumventing, disturbing and vexing one another ; as if they affected nothing more then to render one another as miserable as they can. It is from lust and luxury, from ambition and avarice, from envy and spite, and the like dispositions, which Religion chiefly doth interdict, that all such horrid mischiefs do spring.

In fine, the Precepts of Religion are no other, then such as Physicians would prescribe for the health of our Bodies, as Politicians would avow needfull for the peace of the State, as *Epicurean* Philosophers do recommend for the tranquillity of our Mind, and pleasure of our lives ; such as common reason dictateth, and daily trial sheweth conducible to our welfare in all respects : which consequently, were there no law exacting them of us, we should in wisdom chuse to observe, and voluntarily impose on our selves, confessing them to be fit matters

ters of law, as most advantageous and requisite to the good (general and particular) of mankind. So that what *Plutarch* reporteth *Solon* to have said, *Plut. in Sol.* that he had so squared his Laws to the Citizens, that all of them might clearly perceive, that to observe them was more for their benefit and interest, then to violate them, is far more true concerning the Divine Laws.

II. We may consider more particularly, that Piety yieldeth to the practiser all kind of interiour Content, Peace, and Joy; freeth him from all kinds of dissatisfaction, regret, and disquiet; which is an inestimably great advantage: for certainly the Happiness and Misery of men are wholly or chiefly seated and founded in the Mind. If that is in a good state of health, rest and chearfulness, what-ever the person's outward condition or circumstances be, he cannot be wretched: if that be distempered or disturbed, he cannot be happy. For what if a man seem very poor; if he be abundantly satisfied in his own possessions and enjoyments? What if he tasteth not the pleasures of sense; if he enjoyeth purer and sweeter delights of

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mind?

mind? What if tempests of fortune surround him; if his mind be calm and serene? What if he have few or no friends; if he yet be thoroughly in peace and amity with himself, and can delightfully converse with his own thoughts? What if men slight, censure, or revile him; if he doth value his own state, doth approve his own actions, doth acquit himself of blame in his own conscience? Such external contingencies can surely no more prejudice a man's real Happiness, then winds blustering abroad can harm or trouble him that abideth in a good room within doors, then storms and fluctuations at sea can molest him who standeth firm upon the shore. On the other hand, the greatest affluence of seeming goods will avail nothing, if real content of mind be wanting. For what will the highest eminence of outward state import to him that is dejected in his own conceit? What if the world court and bless him, or if all people do admire and applaud him; if he be displeased with, if he condemneth, if he despiseth himself? What if the weather look fair and bright without, if storms rage in his breast, if black clouds do overcast his Soul?

What

What if he do abound with friends, and enjoy peace abroad ; if he find distraction at home , and is at cruel variance with himself? How can a man enjoy any satisfaction , or relish any pleasure , while sore remorse doth sting him, or solicitous doubts and fears do rack him?

Chrysost. in
Rom. 1. Or. 1.
Εὐθυμίας ὁ
καὶ χαρὰν ἐκ
ἀρχῆς μελ-
ῶν, ἡ χαρ-
μῶν πλῆ-
ῶν, ἡ δὲ
καταστάσις ὅ-
τι, ἐκ τοῦ
σώματος, ἡ

πολυπλοκή τῆς ψυχῆς, ἡ ἱμαλίων καὶ ἀσθενείας, ἡ ἄλλοι πρὸς ἀνθρώπων
ποιεῖν ὁρῶν, ἀλλ' ἡ κατὰ τὸν νόμον μόνον πνευματικῶν, καὶ σωτηρίας ἀποδοῦν.

Now that from the practice of Religion , and from it alone , such inward content and pleasure do spring ; that it onely ministreth reason of content, and disposeth the mind to enjoy it ; that it extirpateth the grounds and roots of discontent ; that it is the onely mother of true, sober alacrity and tranquillity of mind, will, upon considering things, be manifest.

There is no other thing here in this world that can yield any solid or stable content to our mind. For all present enjoyments are transient and evanid ; and of any future thing, in this kingdom of change and contingencie, there can be no assurance. There is nothing below large enough to fill our vast capacities, or to satiate our boundless de-

Prov. 27. 24.

Prov. 27. 20.

fires, or to appease our squeamish delicacy. There is nothing whose sweetness we do not presently exhaust and suck dry ; whereof thence we do not soon grow weary, quite loathing, or faintly liking it. There is not any thing which is not slippery and fleeting ; so that we can for a long time hope to possess it , or for any time can enjoy it , without restless care in keeping it , and anxious fear of losing it. Nothing there is, in the pursuance, the custody, the defence and maintenance whereof we are not liable to disappointments and crosses. Nothing consequently there is productive of any sound content to the fastidious , impatient , greedy and restless heart of man. The greatest confluence of present, corporeal, secular things (of all the health, the riches, the dignity, the power, the friendships and dependences, the wit, the learning and wisdom, the reputation and renown in this world) will not afford much of it ; which yet is but an imaginary supposition ; for in effect hardly do all such accommodations of life concur in any state. There is ever some *dead fly* in our box, which marreth our *ointment* ; some adherent inconvenience, which soureth the

Eccles 10. 1.

the gust of our enjoyments : there is always some good thing absent, which we do want or long for ; some ill thing present, or in prospect, which we abhorre, would avoid, do fear may come. If therefore we would find content, we must not seek it here ; we must want it, or have it from another world : it must come hither from Heaven, and thence onely Piety can fetch it down. This, in stead of these unsatisfying, uncertain and unstable things, supplieth us with goods adequate to our most outstretched wishes, infallibly sure, incessantly durable ; *an indefectible treasure, an incorruptible inheritance, an unshakable Kingdom*, a perfect and endless joy, capable to replenish the vastest heart : which he that hath a good title to, or a confident hope of, how can he be otherwise then extremely pleased, then fully content ? It assureth the favour and friendship of God, of him that is absolute Lord and disposer of all things : the which he that hath, and confideth in, what can he want or wish more ? what can he fear ? what can annoy or dismay him ? what can hap to him worthy to be deemed evil or sad ? What is Poverty to him, for whom God is concerned to provide ?

Θησαυρὸν
ἀνέκλειπτον,
κληρονομίαν
ἀφθάρτην,
βασιλείαν ἀ-
σάλευτον.

What is Disgrace to him, that hath the regard and approbation of God? What is Danger to him, whom God continually protecteth? What can any Distress work on him, whom God doth comfort, and will relieve? What is any thing to him, who is sensible that all things are purposely disposed to him by that Wisdom which perfectly knoweth what is best, by that Goodness which entirely loveth him? In fine, he that is conscious to himself of being well-affected in mind, and acting the best way, who is satisfied in the state of his Soul, secure from God's displeasure, and hopefull of his favour, what can make any grievous impression on him? What other affections then such as are most gratefull and pleasant can lodge in his Soul? Joy and Peace have natural seeds in such a mind, and necessarily must spring up there: (in proportion, I mean, and according to the degrees of Piety resident therein.)

The *Epicureans* did conceit and boast, that having by their Atheistical explications of natural effects, and common events here, discarded the belief and dread of Religion, they had laid a strong foundation for tranquillity of mind, had driven

ven away all the causes of grief and fear, so that nothing then remained troublesome or terrible unto us ; and consequently, What, said they, could forbid, but that we should be entirely contented, glad and happy? — *Nos exæquat victoria cælo* ; No God then surely could be more happy than we. But their attempt in many respects was vain and lame. They presumed of a victory which it is impossible to obtain : and supposing they had got it, their triumph would not have been so glorious, their success would not have been so great, as they pretended. For seeing no *Epicurean* Discourse can baffle the potent arguments which persuade Religion ; (those arguments which the visible constitution of Nature, the current Tradition of all Ages, the general Consent of men, the pregnant attestations of History and Experience concerning supernatural and miraculous events do afford ;) since the Being and Providence of God have proofs so clear and valid, that no subtlety of man can so far evade them, as not to be shaken with them, as wholly to be freed from doubt and suspicion of their truth ; since there can be no means of evincing the negative part in those
questi-

questions to be true or probable ; it is impossible that any considering man, in this cause against Religion, should suppose himself to have acquired an absolute and secure victory ; or that he should reap substantial fruit of comfort thence. It cannot be, that any man should enjoy any perfect quiet, without acting so as to get some good hope of avoiding those dreadful mischiefs, which Religion threatneth to the transgressors of its Precepts. Were there indeed but reason enough to stir, if not to stagger, an Infidel ; were it somewhat dubious whether, yea, were it great odds that there are not reserved any punishments for impiety, as indeed there is, if not the perfectest assurance imaginable, yet vast advantage on the contrary side ; were there but any small reason for a Judgment to come, as there are apparently very many and great ones ; had most men conspired in denying Providence, as ever generally they have consented in avowing it ; were there a pretence of miracles for establishing the Mortality and Impunity of Souls, as there have been numberless, strongly testified by good witnesses and great events, to confirm the opposite doctrines ;
did

did most wise and sober men judge in favour of Irreligion, as commonly they ever did and still do otherwise: yet wisdom would require that men should chuse to be pious, since otherwise no man can be throughly secure. It is a wildness, not to dread the least possibility of incurring such horrible mischiefs: any hazzard of such importance cannot but startle a man in his wits. To be in the least obnoxious to eternal Torments, if men would think upon it as men, (that is, as rational and provident creatures,) could not but disturb them. And indeed so it is in experience: for what-ever they say or seem, all Atheists and profane men are inwardly suspicious and fearfull; they care not to dy, and would gladly scape the trial of what shall follow death. But let us grant or imagine the *Epicurean* successful as he could wish in this enterprize of subduing Religion: yet except therewith he can also trample down Reason, new mould humane nature, subjugate all natural appetites and passions, alter the state of things here, and transform the world, he will yet in greatest part fail of his conceited advantages; very short he will fall of triumphing in a contented

tented and quiet mind. That which accrueth thence will at most be no more then some negative content, or a partial indolency, arising from his being rescued from some particular cares and fears; which exceedeth not the tranquillity of a beast, or the stupidity of one that is out of his senses: that is all he can claim, which yet is more then he can ever compass. For he cannot be as a Beast, or a meer Sot, if he would: Reason, reflecting on present evils, and boding others future, will afflict him; his own unsatiable desires, unavoidable fears and untameable passions will disquiet him. Were the other world quite out of his faith or his thought, yet this world would yield trouble sufficient to render him void of any steady rest, or solid joy. All men ever have, and ever will complain, that the burthens, crosses, satieties of this life, do much surpass the conveniences and comforts of it. So that, were no other to be expected or feared, this of it self would become grievous and nauseous; we should soon have enough or too much of it, without a support and supply from other-where. In the largest affluence of things, in the deepest calm
of

*Non tempe-
state vexor,
sed nauseâ.
Senec. de
Tranq. an. I.*

of our state, we are apt to nauseate, and are weary even of our prosperity itself; the which indeed commonly hath ingredients not onely somewhat unfavoury, but very bitter and loathsome. We may adde, that had those profane attempters quite banished Religion, they with it must have driven away all the benefits and comforts of it; which, even supposing them but imaginary, are yet the greatest which common life doth need, or can desire: with it they would send packing Justice, Fidelity, Charity, Sobriety, and all solid Vertue, things which cannot firmly subsist without Conscience: which being gone, humane life would be the most disorderly, most unsafe, most wretched and contemptible thing that can be; nothing but insipid and flashy sensualities would be left behind to comfort a man with; and those hardly any man (by reason of competitions and contentions for them, no-wise restrainable) could enjoy quietly, or safely. It is therefore Piety alone, which, by raising hopes of blessings and joys incomparably superior to any here, that cannot be taken from us, can lay any ground of true content, of substantial and positive content;

- tent; such as consisteth not onely in removing the objects and causes of vexatious passions, but in employing the most pleasant affections (love, hope, joy,) with a delightfull complacence upon their proper and most noble objects. *The Kingdom of God* (and that onely, no other Kingdom hath that privilege) *consisteth in righteousness* (first, then in) *peace and spiritual joy*. No Philosopher, with truth and reason, can make that overture to us which our
- Rom. 14. 17. Lord doth; *Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and ye shall find rest to your souls*. Out of Religion there can be no Aphorism pretended like to that of the Prophet, *Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee*.
- Matt. 11. 28.
- Isa. 26. 3.

If indeed we distinctly survey all the grounds and sources of Content, it will appear that Religion onely can afford it.

Doth it result from a well governing and ordering our Passions? Then it is plain, that onely a pious man is capable thereof; for Piety onely can effect that: it alone, with the powerfull aid of Divine Grace, doth guide our passions by exact rules, doth set them upon worthy objects, doth temper and tune them in
just

just harmony, doth seasonably curb and check them, doth rightly correct and reform them. This no bare Reason (which naturally is so dimme and so feeble in man) can atchieve: much less can Unreasonableness doe it, which is ever prevalent in irreligious persons. Their Passions do ever run wildly and at randome, in no good pace, within no good compass, toward the meanest and basest objects; whence they can have no rest or quiet in their minds. As they are constantly offending, so will they ever be punishing themselves, with intestine broils and conflicts, with dissatisfactions and regrets.

Mala mens—cūm insidiatur, spe, curis, labore dstringitur; & jam cūm sceleris compos fuerit, solitudine, pœnitentiâ, pœnarum omnium expectatione torquetur. Quint. 12. 1.

Nulla major pœna nequitiæ est, quàm quòd sibi ac suis displicet. Sen. Ep. 42.

Τίμωρ ἐστὶν πῶτος ἀδικίας ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος. Plat. de Leg. 5.

Hence, *There is no peace to the wicked. Isa. 48. 22. He is like the troubled sea, which cannot rest. 57. 20.* God (as S. Austine speaketh) hath said it, and so it is, Every inordinate mind is a punishment to it self.

Deum iussit, & ita est, Sibi pœna est omnis inordinatus animus. Aug. Conf.

Doth Content spring from a hearty approbation of, or a complacence in a man's own actions; from reflexion that he constantly doth act according to reason and wisdom, to justice and duty? Then can the pious man alone pretend to

*Nisi sapienti
sua non pla-
cent : omnis
stultitia labo-
rat fastidio
sui. Sen.
Ep. 9.*

to it, who knoweth that he walketh *in-
offensively toward God and man*; that he
consulteth his own best interest and wel-
fare; that assuredly no bad consequence
can attend his unblameable behaviour;
that most wise men have declared their
approbation of his proceedings; that if
he prove in his chief design mistaken,
yet no mischief can thence befall him;
yea, that he is not thereby quite disap-
pointed, seeing even much present satis-
faction and convenience do arise up to
him from his practice.

Doth Content grow from a sound and
healthfull constitution of Soul? It is the
pious man alone that hath that, whose
mind is clear from distempers of vice
and passion. The impious man is infirm,
out of order, full of disease and pain,
according to the Prophet's description
of him; — *The whole head is sick, and
the whole heart faint: From the sole of
the foot even unto the head there is no
soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises,
and putrefying sores.*

Doth Content arise specially from
good success in our attempts, or from
prosperous events befalling us? Then it
is the pious man who is most capable
thereof: for he onely is secure, that
what

what seemeth good and prosperous is really such to him, as meant for his good by the Divine Goodness, as tending thereto by the guidance of infallible Wisdom. As he onely hath ground to hope for success, because he confideth in God, because he dutifully seeketh God's help, because God is favourably disposed toward him, because *God ordereth his steps*, because God is by promise engaged to bless him, because he is conscious of intentions to render God thanks and praise for it, to employ his success to God's honour and service: so he onely can be satisfied with the appearance of success, being able with assurance to say after *S. Paul*, *We know* Rom. 8. 28. *that to those who love God all things co-operate for good.*

Is security from danger, from trouble, from want, from all evil, a source or matter of Content? It certainly doth attend the pious man; God being his especial Protector, his Comforter, his Purveyor. *There shall no evil befall the just: There shall no plague come near his dwelling. God keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken. He delivereth the righteous out of their troubles. The desire of the righteous shall be granted. There is* Prov. 12. 21. Psal. 91. 10. Psal. 34. 20, 17. Prov. 10. 24. Psal. 34. 9.

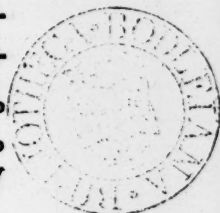
no want to them that fear God. So do the Holy Oracles assure us.

Doth Contentedness spring from sufficiency, real or apprehended? This appertaineth peculiarly to the pious man; for, having God, the Master of all, for *his* portion, he hath the richest estate that can be; he hath all that he can desire, he cannot but take himself to have enough. Hence *Godliness with contentedness* (*μετ' ἀνταρκείας, with sufficiency*) is (as S. Paul saith) *μέγας πορισμός, the great way of gaining*. He saith it not, as supposing Godliness and Contentedness to be separable; but rather, as implying Godliness therefore to be most gainfull, because Sufficiency and Contentedness do ever attend it. In fine, if that saying of Seneca be true, that, *If to any man the things he possesseth do not seem most ample, although he be Master of the whole World, he is yet miserable*; then assuredly the pious man onely can be happy; for to him alone his possessions can seem the largest and best, such as there can be no possible accession to, or amendment of. For nothing can be greater or better than God, in whom he hath a stedfast propriety, whose infinite power and wisdom are engaged to doe him

*Si cui sua
non videntur
amplissima,
licet totius
Mundi Domi-
nus sit, ta-
men miser est.*
Sen. Ep. 9.

him the utmost good that he is capable of. And farther,

III. Seeing we have mentioned Happiness, or the *Summum bonum*, the utmost scope of humane desire, we do adde, that Piety doth surely confer it. Happiness, what-ever it be, hath certainly an essential coherence with Piety. These are reciprocal Propositions, both of them infallibly true, He that is pious is happy; and, He that is happy is pious. No man doth undertake or prosecute any thing, which he doth not apprehend in some order or degree conducing to that which all men under a confused notion regard and tend to, which they call Happiness, the highest Good, the chiefest desirable thing. But in their judgments about this thing, or the means of attaining it, as men dissent much; so of necessity most of them must be mistaken. Most, indeed, do aim and shoot at a meer shadow of profit; or at that which is very little considerable, and in comparison nothing at all; which little conduceth to the perfection of their nature, or the satisfaction of their desire. If they miss the mark, they are disappointed; if they hit it,



they are no less, and in effect hit nothing. But what-ever this grand matter is, in what-ever it consisteth, how-ever it be procured; be it the possession and fruition of some special choice goods, or an aggregation and affluence of all goods; Piety surely is the main ingredient, and principal cause thereof. All other goods without it are insignificant and unusefull thereto; and it cannot be wanting, where Piety is. Be a man never so rich, so powerfull, so learned and knowing, so prosperous in his affairs, so honourable in the opinions and affections of men: yet no-wise happy can he be, if he is not pious; being he wanteth the best goods, and is subject to the worst evils; being he wanteth the love and favour of God, he wanteth peace and satisfaction of Conscience, he wanteth a right enjoyment of present things, he wanteth security concerning his final welfare. Be he never so poor, so low in the eyes of men, so forlorn and destitute of worldly conveniencies; yet if he be pious, he cannot be wretched: for he hath an interest in goods incomparably most precious, and is safe from all considerable evils; he hath a free resort to the inextinguishable

haustible fountain of all Happiness, he hath a right to immense and endless Felicity, the which eminently containeth all the goods we are capable of; he is possessed thereof in hope, and certain reversion, there is but a moment to pass before his complete fruition of it. The want of all other petty things no more can maim the integrity of his Felicity, then cutting the hair, or paring the nails, do mutilate a man: all other things are but superfluities or excrescencies in regard to the constitution of Happiness. What-ever happeneth, that will assuredly be true, which is so much inculcated in H. Scripture, *Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways; Happy shall he be, and it shall be well with him.* Pf. 128. 1, 2. 112. 1. Piety is indeed fraught with Beatitudes, every part thereof yieldeth peculiar Blessedness. To the love of God, to charity toward our neighbour, to purity of heart, to meekness, to humility, to patience, to mercifulness, to peaceableness Beatitude is ascribed by our Lord, (the great Judge and Dispenser of it.) Each religious performance hath happy fruits growing from it, and blissfull rewards assigned thereto. All pious dispositions are fountains of

Matt. 5.

pleasant streams, which by their confluence do make up a full sea of Felicity.

IV. It is a peculiar advantage of Piety, that it furnisheth employment fit for us, worthy of us, hugely gratefull, and highly beneficial to us. Man is a very busie and active creature, which cannot live and doe nothing, whose thoughts are in restless motion, whose desires are ever stretching at somewhat, who perpetually will be working either good or evil to himself: wherefore greatly profitable must that thing be, which determineth him to act well, to spend his care and pain on that which is truly advantageous to him; and that is Religion onely. It alone fastneth our thoughts, affections and endeavours, upon occupations worthy the dignity of our nature, futing the excellency of our natural capacities and endowments, tending to the perfection and advancement of our Reason, to the enriching and ennobling of our Souls. Secluding that, we have nothing in the world to study, to affect, to pursue, not very mean and below us, not very base and misbecoming us, as men of reason and judgement. What have we to doe but to
eat

eat and drink, like horses or like swine; but to sport and play, like children or apes; but to bicker and scuffle about trifles and impertinencies, like idiots? what, but to scrape or scramble for useless pelf; to hunt after empty shews and shadows of honour, or the vain fancies and dreams of men? what, but to wallow or bask in fordid pleasures, the which soon degenerate into remorse and bitterness? To which sort of employments were a man confined, what a pitifull thing would he be, and how inconsiderable were his life? Were a man designed onely, like a flie, to buzz about here for a time, sucking in the air, and licking the dew, then soon to vanish back into nothing, or to be transformed into worms; how sorry and despicable a thing were he? And such without Religion we should be. But it supplieth us with business of a most worthy nature, and lofty importance; it setteth us upon doing things great and noble as can be; it engageth us to free our minds from all fond conceits, and cleanse our hearts from all corrupt affections; to curb our brutish appetites, to tame our wild passions, to correct our perverse inclinations, to conform the

dispositions of our Soul and the actions of our life to the eternal laws of righteousness and goodness: it putteth us upon the imitation of God, and aiming at the resemblance of his perfections; upon obtaining a friendship, and maintaining a correspondence with the High and Holy one; upon fitting our minds for conversation and society with the wisest and purest Spirits above; upon providing for an immortal state; upon the acquist of joy and glory everlasting. It employeth us in the divinest actions, of promoting Vertue, of performing beneficence, of serving the publick, and doing good to all: the being exercised in which things doth indeed render a man highly considerable, and his life excellently valuable.

'Tis an employment most proper to us as reasonable men. For what more proper entertainments can our mind have, then to be purifying and beautifying it self, to be keeping it self and its subordinate faculties in order, to be attending upon the management of thoughts, of passions, of words, of actions depending upon its governance?

'Tis an employment most beneficial to us: in pursuing which we greatly
better

better our selves, and improve our condition ; we benefit and oblige others ; we procure sound reputation, and steddy friendships ; we decline many irksome mischiefs and annoyances ; *we do* Isa. 55. 2. 3 not (like those in the Prophet) *spend our labour for that which satisfieth not, nor spend our money for that which is not bread :* for both temporal prosperity and eternal felicity are the wages of the labour which we take herein.

'Tis an employment most constant, never allowing sloth or listlessness to creep in, incessantly busying all our faculties with earnest contention ; according to that profession of *S. Paul*, declaring the nature thereof, *Herein al-* Acts 24. 16. *ways do I exercise my self, to have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man.* Whence it is called a *Fight*, and a *Race*, implying the continual earnestness of attention and activity which is to be spent thereon.

It is withall a sweet and gratefull business : for it is a pious man's character, that *he delighteth greatly in God's com-* Psal. 112. 1. *mandments ; that the commandments are* 1 Joh. 5. 3. *not grievous to him ; that it is his meat* Joh. 4. 34. *and drink to doe God's will ; that God's* Pf. 119. 103. *words (or precepts) are sweeter then ho-*
ny

Prov. 3. 17. *ny to his tast ; that the ways of religious wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.* Whereas all other employments are wearisome, and soon become loathsome : this, the farther we proceed in it, the more pleasant and satisfactory it groweth. There is perpetual matter of victory over bad inclinations pestering us within, and strong temptations assailing us without: which to combat hath much delight ; to master, breedeth unexpressible content. The sense also of God's love, the influences of his grace and comfort communicated in the performances of devotion and all duty, the satisfaction of good Conscience, the assured hope of reward, the foretastes of future bliss, do season and sweeten all the labours taken, all the difficulties undergone therein.

*Non potest
cuiquam sem-
per idem pla-
cere, nisi rec-
tum. Sen. 20.
Dedit hoc
providentia
hominibus
munus, ut ho-
nesta magis
juvarent.
Quint. 1. 12.*

In fine, the bare light of Nature hath discerned, that were it not for such matters as these to spend a man's care and pains upon, this would be a lamentable world to live in. There was, for instance, an Emperour great and mighty as ever did wield scepter upon earth, whose excellent Vertue, coupled with wisdom, (inferiour, perhaps, to none that any man ever without special inspi-
ration

ration hath been endowed with) did qualifie him with most advantage to examine, and rightly to judge of things here; who, notwithstanding all the conveniencies which his Royal estate and well-settled prosperity might afford, (the which surely he had fully tasted and tried,) did yet thus express his thoughts; *Τί μοι ζῆν ἐν νότῳ κενῷ δέων, ἢ περὶ τοῦ θεοῦ;* *What doth it concern me to live in a world void of God, or void of Providence?* To govern the greatest Empire that ever was, in the deepest calm; to enjoy the largest affluences of wealth, of splendour, of respect, of pleasure; to be loved, to be dreaded, to be served, to be adored by so many nations; to have the whole civil World obsequious to his will and nod; all these things seemed vain and idle, not worthy of a man's regard, affection, or choice, in case there were no God to worship, no Providence to observe, no Piety to be exercised. So little worth the while common sense hath adjudged it to live without Religion.

M. Ant. II.
II. & VI. 10.

V. It is a considerable benefit of Piety, that it affordeth the best Friendships, and sweetest Society. Man is framed

*Nullius boni
sine socio ju-
cunda posses-
sio est. Sen.*

Ep. 6.

*Ut aliarum
rerum nobis
innata dulce-
do est, sic a-
micitiæ. Sen.*

Ep. 9.

Prov. 12. 2.

Psal. 34. 15.

& 33. 18. &

145. 19. &

37. 28.

Job 36. 7.

med for Society, and cannot live well without it; many of his faculties would be useless, many of his appetites would rest unsatisfied in solitude. To have a friend wise and able, honest and good, unto whom upon all occasions we may have recourse for advice, for assistance, for consolation, is a great convenience of life: and this benefit we owe to Religion, which supplieth us with various Friendships of the best kind, most beneficial and most sweet unto us.

It maketh God our Friend, a Friend infinitely better than all friends, most affectionate and kind, most faithfull and sure, most able, most willing, and ever most ready to perform all friendly offices, to yield advice in all our doubts, succour in all our needs, comfort in all our troubles, satisfaction to all our desires. Unto him it ministreth a free address upon all occasions; with him it alloweth us continually a most sweet and pleasant intercourse. The pious man hath always the All-wise God to counsel him, to guide his actions, and order his steps; he hath the All-mighty to protect, support and relieve him; he hath the immense Goodness to commiserate and comfort him: unto him he is not one-

onely encouraged, but obliged to resort in need; upon him he may, he ought to discharge all his cares and burthens.

It consequently doth engage all creatures in the world to be our friends, or instruments of good to us, according to their several capacities, by the direction and disposal of God. All the servants of our great Friend will, in compliance to him, be serviceable to us, *Thou shalt* Job 5. 23. *be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee:* So Job's friend promiseth him upon condition of Piety. And God himself confirmeth that promise, *In that* Hos. 2. 18. *day (saith he in the Prophet) will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground.* And again, *When thou passest through the* Isa. 43. 2. *waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.* And, *The sun shall not* Psal. 121. 6. *smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder,* Psal. 91. 13. *the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under foot. They shall take up* Mark 16. 18. *scor-*

scorpions ; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them : (so our Lord promised to his Disciples.) Not

Deut. 28.12. onely the Heavens shall dispense their kindly influences, and the Earth yield her plentiful stores, and all the Elements discharge their natural and ordinary good offices ; nor onely the tame and sociable creatures shall upon this condition faithfully serve us ; but even the most wild, most fierce, most ravenous, most venomous creatures shall, if there be need, prove friendly and helpful, or at least harmless, to us : as were
 1 King. 17. 6. the Ravens to *Elias*, the Lions to *Daniel*, the Viper to *S. Paul*, the Fire to the *Three Children*.

But especially Piety doth procure the friendship of the good Angels, that puissant host of glorious and happy Spirits: they all do tenderly love the pious person ; they are ever ready to serve and do
 Psal. 34. 7. him good, to protect him from danger,
 91. 11. to aid him in his undertakings, to re-
 Heb. 1. 14. scue him from mischiefs. What an honour, what a blessing is this, to have such an innumerable company of noble Friends (the Courtiers and Favourites of Heaven) deeply concerned, and constantly vigilant for our welfare ?

It

The Third Sermon.

III

It also engageth the blessed Saints in glory, *the Spirits of men perfected, the Church of the first-born*, to bear dearest affection to us, to further our prosperity with their good wishes, and earnest prayers, mightily prevalent with God.

It rendreth all sorts of men our friends. To good men it uniteth us in holy communion; the communion of brotherly charity and hearty good will, attended with all the good offices they are able to perform: to other men it reconcileth and endeareth us; for that innocent and inoffensive, courteous and benign, charitable and beneficent demeanour, (such as Piety doth require and produce) are apt to conciliate respect and affection from the worst men.

For, *Vincit malos pertinax bonitas*; men hardly can persist enemies to him whom

Sen. de Benef. 7. 21.

they perceive to be their friend: and

such the pious man in disposition of mind, and in effect, when occasion ser-

Qui sibi amicus est, seculo hunc amicum omnibus esse. Sen. Ep. 6.

veteth, is toward all men; being sensible

Gal. 6. 10.

of his obligation to love all men, and,

as he hath opportunity, to doe good to all

Oi αγαθοι ηδαις ἀλλήλοις. Arist. Eth. 8. 4.

men. It assureth, and more strictly en-

deareth our friends to us. For, as it ma-

keth us hearty, faithfull, constant friends

to others; so it reciprocally tieth others

to

to us in the like sincerity and fastness of good will.

Prov. 16. 7. It reconcileth enemies. For, *when a man's ways do please the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him.* It hath a natural efficacy to that purpose, and Divine blessing promoteth it.

By it all conversation becometh tolerable, gratefull, and usefull. For a pi-

ous man is not easily disturbed with any crossness or perverseness, any infirmity or impertinency of those he converseth with: he can bear the weaknesses and the failings of his company; he

can by wholesome reflexions upon all occurrences advantage and please himself.

*Quæris quid
profecerim?
amicus esse
mibi cœpi.
Sen. Ep. 6.*

In fine, Piety rendreth a man a true friend and a good companion to himself; satisfied in himself, able to converse freely and pleasantly with his own thoughts. It is for the want of pious inclinations and dispositions, that solitude (a thing which sometimes cannot be avoided, which often should be embraced) is to most men so irksome and tedious; that men do carefully shun themselves, and fly from their own thoughts;

*Nemo est, cui
non satius sit
cum quolibet
esse, quam
secum. Sen.
Ep. 25.*

thoughts; that they decline all converse with their own Souls, and hardly dare look upon their own hearts and Consciences: whence they become aliens from home, wholly unacquainted with themselves, most ignorant of their own nearest concerns, no faithfull friends or pleasant companions to themselves: so for refuge and ease they unseasonably run into idle or lewd conversation, where they disorder and defile themselves. But the pious man is (like *Scipio*) *never less alone*, then when alone: his solitude and retirement is not onely tolerable, but commonly the most gratefull and fruitfull part of his life: he can ever with much pleasure, and more advantage, converse with himself; digesting and marshalling his thoughts, his affections, his purposes into good order; searching and discussing his heart, reflecting on his past ways, enforcing his former good resolutions, and framing new ones; enquiring after edifying

I

Ἐν τῇ ἰδίῳ βίῳ, ὡς ἀπερπατοῦν θέαμα, περιιδεῖν ἔχ' ὑπομύσειν, &c. Plut. περὶ Πολυπρ. p. 916.

Ζητῶσιν οἱ μὴ χθροὶ μὲθ' ἑν συνημερδύουσι, ἐαυτοὺς ὁφείλουσιν—Arist. 9.4.

Nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus.

Acquiescit sibi, cogitationibus suis traditus. Sen. Ep. 9.

Sapiens nunquam solus esse potest, habet secum omnes qui sunt, quique unquam fuerunt boni; & animum liberum quocunque vult transfert: quod corpore non potest, cogitatione complectitur; & si hominum inops fuerit, loquitur cum Deo. Nunquam minus solus erit, quam cum solus fuerit. Hier. adv. Jovin. 1. 28.

truths;

truths, stretching his meditations toward the best and sublimest objects, raising his hopes and warming his affections toward spiritual and heavenly things; asking himself pertinent questions, and resolving incident doubts concerning his practice; in fine, conversing with his best Friend in devotion; with admiration and love contemplating the Divine perfections, displayed in the works of nature, of providence, of grace; praising God for his excellent benefits and mercies; confessing his defects and offences; deprecating wrath, and imploring pardon, with grace and ability to amend; praying for the supply of all his wants. All which performances yield both unconceivable benefit, and unexpressible comfort. So that Solitude (that which is to common nature so offensive, to corrupt nature so abominable) is to the pious man extremely commodious and comfortable: which is a great advantage peculiar to Piety, and the last which I shall mention.

So many, and many more then I can express, vastly great and precious advantages do accrue from Piety: so that well may we conclude with *S. Paul*, that *Godliness is profitable for all things.*

It

It remaineth that, if we be wise, we should, if we yet have it not ingrafted in us, labour to acquire it ; if we have it, that we should endeavour to improve it, by constant exercise, to the praise of God, the good of our neighbour, and our own comfort. Which that we may effectually perform, Almighty God in mercy vouchsafe, by his grace, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord ; to whom for ever be all glory and praise. *Amen.*



The Fourth Sermon.

1 SAM. 2. 30.

For them that honour me, I will honour:

THE words are in the strictest sense the word of God, uttered immediately by God himself; and may thence command from us an especial attention and regard. The History of that which occasioned them is, I presume, well known, neither shall I make any descant or reflexion thereon; but do take the words separately, as a Proposition of it self, affording a compleat instruction, and ample matter of discourse. And as such, they plainly imply two things: a Duty required of us, to *honour God*; and a Reward proffered to us, upon performance of that Duty, being *honoured by God*. It is natural for us, before we are willing to undertake any work, to consider the reward or benefit accruing from it; and
it

it is necessary, before we can perform any duty, to understand the nature thereof. To this our method of action I shall suit the method of my Discourse; first endeavouring to estimate the Reward, then to explain the Duty. Afterward I mean to shew briefly why in reason the Duty is enjoined; how in effect the Reward is conferred.

I. The Reward may be considered either absolutely, (as what it is in it self;) or relatively, (as to its rise, and whence it comes.)

1. For its self, it is Honour; a thing, if valued according to the rate it bears in the common market, of highest price among all the objects of humane desire; the chief reward which the greatest actions, and which the best actions do pretend unto, or are capable of; that which usually bears most sway in the hearts, and hath strongest influence upon the lives of men: the desire of obtaining and maintaining which doth commonly overbear other most potent inclinations. The love of Pleasure stoops thereto: for men, to get or keep Reputation, will decline the most pleasant enjoyments, will embrace the hardest

I 3 pains.

Ἰδοὺ δ' ἂν καὶ οἱ ἰσ-
ωτῶν τοῦ ἐπιμαρτυροῦ
πρὸς ἄλλους καὶ ἐδιδότες ἂν τὸ
ζῆν ἀντιπαλαξαμένους,
ὥστε ὅ τῷ τυχεῖν καλῆς
δύσεως ἀποθνήσκειν. Ἐδιδό-
τας. Isocr. Orat. ad Philip.

Mors tum æquissimo ani-
mo appetitur, cum suis se
laudibus vita occidens con-
solari potest. Cic. 1. Tusc.

—Laudis avidi pecunia
liberales erant, gloriam in-
gentem divitias honestas
volebant; hanc ardentissi-
mè dilexerunt, propter hanc
vivere voluerunt, pro hac et
mori non dubitaverunt. Cæ-
teras cupiditates hujus u-
nius ingenti cupiditate pres-
ferunt. Ang. de Civ. D. 5. 12.

Αἱ γὰρ δυναστεῖαι καὶ ὁ
πλοῦτος διὰ τὴν πλεονέχειν
αἰστανται. Arist. Eth. IV. 3.

pains. Yea, it often prevails
over the love of life it self,
which men do not onely fre-
quently expose to danger,
but sometimes devote to cer-
tain loss, for its sake. If we
observe what is done in the
world, we may discern it to
be the source of most under-
takings therein: that it not
onely moveth the wheels of
publick action, (that not
onely for it great Princes
contend, great armies march,
great battels are fought;) but
that from it most pri-
vate business derives its life
and vigour: that for Ho-
nour especially the Souldier
undergoes hardship, toil,
and hazzard; the Scholar
plods and beats his brains;
the Merchant runs about so
busily, and adventures so
far; yea, that for its sake the
meanest Labourer and Arti-
ficer doth spend his sweat,
and stretch his sinews. The
principal drift of all this
care and industry (the great
reason of all this scuffling for
Power, this searching for Knowledge,
this

this scraping and scrambling for wealth) doth seem to be, that men would live in some credit, would raise themselves above contempt.

Honos alit artes, omnesque incenduntur ad studia gloria, &c. Cic. Tusc. Qu. I.

In such request, of such force doth Honour appear to be. If we examine why, we may find more then meer fashion (or mutual imitation and consent) to ground the experiment upon. There is one obvious reason, why no mean regard should be had thereto, its great convenience and usefulness: for that a man cannot himself live safely, quietly or pleasantly, without some competent measure thereof; cannot well serve the publick, perform offices of duty to his relations, of kindness to his friends, of charity to his neighbours, but under its protection, and with its aid: it being an engine very requisite for the managing any business, for the compassing any design, at least sweetly and smoothly; it procuring to us many furtherances in our proceedings, removing divers obstacles out of our way, guarding a man's person from offences, adding weight to his words, putting an edge upon his endeavours: for every one allows a favourable ear to his discourse,

Vid. Hier. Ep. ad Celandant.

Conscientia nobis necessaria est, fama proxima.

Qui conscientiam fidens, famam negligit, crudelis est. Aug.

Πεδὶς ἡγεῖται ὁμιλῶντων ὁρᾶν ἢ δόξα. Galen.

Nec verò negligenda fama est; nec mediocre telum ad res gerendas existimare oportet benevolentiam civium. Cic. de Amic.

Vid. Chryf. Tom. 6. Orat. 17.

The Fourth Sermon.

lends an assisting hand to his attempts, grants a ready credence to his testimony, and makes a fair construction of his doings, whom he esteems and respects. So is Honour plainly valuable among the *bona utilia*, as no small accommodation of life; and as such, Reason approves it to our judgment.

But searching farther, we shall find the appetite of Honour to have a deeper ground, and that it is rooted even in our Nature it self. For we may descry it budding forth in mens first Infancy, (before the use of reason, or speech;) even little Children being ambitious to be made much of, maintaining among themselves petty emulations and competitions, as it were, about punctilio's of Honour. We may observe it growing with Age, waxing bigger and stronger together with the encrease of wit and knowledge, of civil culture and experience: that the maturest age doth most resent and relish it; that it prevails most in civilized nations; that men of the best parts, of the highest improvements, of the weightiest employments, do most zealously affect it and stand upon it; that they who most struggle with it, do most feel its might, how

*Vidi ego &
expertus sum
zelantem
parvulum,
&c. Aug.*

how difficult it is to resist or restrain it, how impossible it is to stifle or extinguish it. For the Philosopher with all his reasons and considerations cannot dispute it down, or persuade it away; the Anchorer cannot with all his austerities starve it, or by his retirements shun it: no affliction, no poverty, no wretchedness of condition can totally suppress it. 'Tis a spirit that not onely haunts our Courts and Palaces, but frequents our Schools and Cloisters, yea *In solitudine* creeps into Cottages, into Hospitals, in- *sitis, subrepi-* to Prisons, and even doggs men into *superbia. Hier.* Desarts and Solitudes: so close it sticks to our nature. *Plato* says it is the last coat which a wise man doth put off. But I question whether he could shew us that wise man who had done it, or could tell us where he dwelt, except perhaps in his own *Utopian* Republick. For they who most pretend to have done it, (who in their discourse most vilifie Honour; who talk like *Chrysostom* *Cic. de Fin. 3.* *pau.*, that a wise man for Reputation sake will not so much as stretch out his finger, or like *Seneca*, that we should doe every thing purely for conscience sake, without any regard to mens opinion; who make harangues and write volumes

*Nihil opinio-
nis causa,
omnia consci-
entia faci-
am. Sen. de
V. B.*

*Nil sit illi
cum ambitio-
ne famâque
commune, si-
bi placeat.*

Epist. 113.

*Iustum esse
gratis opor-
ret. ib.*

Id. de Ira 3.

41.

** Laert.*

*Erat fame
sua curiosis-
simus, & ma-
lè loquentium
dictis vel li-
teris vel ser-
mone respon-
debat. Capit.
* Tert. Apol.*

volumes against Glory,) do yet appear by their practice, sometimes, by so doing, to aim at it : even as men do usually complain of and eagerly quarrel with that which they most affect and woe. *Chrysippus* wrote, as we are * told, above 700 books, most of them concerning Logical quirks, and such as one can hardly imagine what other drift he could have in composing them, beside ostentation of his subtilty and sharpness of wit. *Seneca*, if history do not wrong him, and the face of his actions do not misrepresent him, was not in his heart exempt from a spice of Ambition. Yea, that excellent Emperour *M. Aurelius*, who would often speak like a *Stoick*, could not but commonly act like a Man, more by his practice commending Honour, then he disparaged it in his words. For Story represents him very carefull and jealous of his credit, very diligent to preserve it, and to repair it. * *Tertullian* calls such Philosophers *negotiores fame*, (Merchants for fame :) and it is perchance some part of their cunning in that trade, which makes them strive to beat down the price of this commodity, that they may more easily engross it to themselves. However,

expe-

experience proves that such words are but words; (words spoken out of affectation and pretence, rather than in good earnest and according to truth;) that endeavours to banish or to extirpate this desire are but fond and fruitless attempts. The reason why is clear; for 'tis as if one should dispute against eating and drinking, or should labour to free himself from hunger and thirst; the appetite of Honour being indeed, as that of Food, innate unto us, so as not to be quenched or smothered, except by some violent distemper or indisposition of mind; even by the wise Authour of our nature originally implanted therein, for very good ends and uses, respecting both the private and publick benefit of men; as an engagement to Vertue, and a restraint from Vice; as an excitement of industry, an incentive of courage, a support of constancy in the prosecution of worthy enterprises; as a serviceable instrument for the constitution, conservation and improvement of humane society. For did not some love of Honour glow in mens breasts, were that noble spark quite extinct, few men probably would study for honourable qualities, or perform

Ut quidam morbo aliquo & sensus stupore suavitatem cibi non sentiunt; sic libidinosi, avari, facinorosi vere laudis gustum non habent.
Cic. Philipp. 2.

Αἰδώς δ' οἱ
 δουρὶν πάν-
 των γνέτη-
 ρα κακίων.
 Naz. Carm.
 36.

form laudable deeds; there would be nothing to keep some men within bounds of honesty and decency, to deterre them from doing odious and ugly things; men, not caring what others thought of them, would not regard what they did themselves; a barbarous sloth or brutish stupidity would overspread the world, withdrawing from common life most of its ornaments, much of its convenience; men generally would, if not altogether shun society, yet at least decline the cares and burthens requisite to the promoting its welfare, for the sustaining which usually the chief encouragement, the main recompence, is this of Honour. That men therefore have so tender and delicate a sense of their Reputation, (so that touching it is like pricking a nerve, as soon felt and as smartly offensive,) is an excellent provision in nature; in regard whereto Honour may pass among the *bona naturalia*, as a Good necessary for the satisfaction of nature, and for securing the accomplishment of its best designs.

*Negligere
 quid de se
 quisque sen-
 tiai, arrogan-*

A moderate regard to Honour is also commendable as an instance of humanity or good will to men, yea, as an argument

ment of humility, or a sober conceit of our selves. For to desire another man's esteem, and consequently his love, (which in some kind or degree is an inseparable companion of esteem) doth imply somewhat of reciprocal esteem and affection toward him; and to prize the judgment of other men concerning us, doth signifie, that we are not over-satisfied with our own.

We might for its farther commendation allege the authority of the more cool and candid sort of Philosophers, (such as grounded their judgment of things upon notions agreeable to common sense and experience; who adapted their rules of practice to the nature of man, such as they found it in the world, not such as they framed it in their own fancies,) who have ranked Honour among the principal of things desirable, and adorned it with fairest eulogies; terming it a divine thing, the best of exterior goods, the most honest fruit and most ample reward of true Vertue; adjudging, that to neglect the opinions of men (especially of persons

Θεῶν ἢ ἡ πρῆ. Plat. de Leg. IV.

Καλὸν ταῖς πολλαῖς πό-
λεσι τὸ ἀγαλῆυσμα εἶναι,
ἀρετῆμα ἐυδοξίαν ἀρε-
τῶν πολλῶν. Idem, de
Rep. XII.

Μίσηται ὅς ἐκτὸς ἀγα-
θῶν ἡ πρῆ. Arist. Eth.
IV. 3.

worthy

Levis est animi, iustam gloriam, qui est fructus virtutis honestissimus, repudiare. Cic. in Pis.

Ex omnibus praeiis virtutis amplissimum est prae-mium gloria. Idem, pro Mil.

worthy and laudable) is a sign of stupid baseness, that to condemn them is an effect of unreasonable haughtiness; representing the love of Honour (rightly grounded and duly moderated) not onely as the parent and guardian (as productive and preservative) of other Vertues, but as a Vertue it self, of no small magnitude and lustre in the Constellation of Vertues, the Vertue of Generosity. A Vertue which, next to the spirit of true Religion, (next to a hearty reverence toward the Supreme Blessed Goodness, and that holy Charity toward men which springeth thence,) doth lift a man up nearest to Heaven; doth raise his mind above the sordid desires, the sorry cares, the fond humours, the perverse and forward passions, with which men commonly are possessed and acted: that Vertue, which enflames a man with Courage, so that he dares perform what reason and duty require of him, that he disdains to doe what is bad or base; which inspires him with Sincerity, that he values his honesty before all other interests and respects, that he abhors
to

to wrong or deceive, to flatter or abuse any man, that he cannot endure to seem otherwise then he is, to speak otherwise then he means, to act otherwise then he promises and professes; which endows him with Courtesie, that he is ready to yield every man his due respect, to afford any man what help and succour he is able: that Vertue, which renders a man upright in all his dealings, and correspondent to all his obligations; a loyall Subject to his Prince, and a true lover of his Country, a candid judge of persons and things, an earnest favourer of what-ever is good and commendable, a faithfull and hearty friend, a beneficial and usefull neighbour, a gratefull resenter and requiter of courtesies, hospitable to the stranger, bountifull to the poor, kind and good to all the world: that Vertue, in fine, which constitutes a man of honour, who surely is the best man next to a man of conscience. Thus may Honour be valued from natural light, and according to common sense.

Trahimur omnes laudis studio, & optimus quisque maximè gloriâ ducitur.
Cic. pro Arch.
Οἱ ἀγαθὲς καὶ πρᾶξιμοι.
plausible and active men do (saith Aristotle)
place Happiness in Honour. (Eth. 1. 4.)

But beyond all this, the Holy Scripture (that most certain standard by which we may examine and determine the true worth of things) doth not teach us to slight Honour, but rather in its

its fit order and just measure to love and prize it. It indeed instructs us to ground it well: (not upon bad qualities or wicked deeds, that's villainous madness; not upon things of a mean and indifferent nature, that's vanity; not upon counterfeit shews and pretences, that's hypocrisie; but upon real worth and goodness, that may consist with modesty and sobriety :) it enjoyns us not to be immoderate in our desires thereof, or complacencies therein, not to be irregular in the pursuit or acquist of it; (to be so is pride and ambition;) but to affect it calmly, to purchase it fairly: it directs us not to make a regard thereto our chief principle, not to propound it as our main end of action: it charges us to bear contentedly the want or loss thereof, (as of other temporal goods :) yea, in some cases, for Conscience sake or for God's service, (that is, for a good incomparably better then it,) it obliges us willingly to prostitute and sacrifice it, chusing rather to be infamous then impious, (to be in disgrace with men, rather then in disfavour with God :) it, in fine, commands us to seek and embrace it onely in subordination and with final reference

*Non vis esse
justus sine
gloria? at
mehercule sa-
pe justus esse
debes cum in-
famia. Sen.
Epist. 113.*

rence to God's honour. Which distinctions and cautions being provided, Honour is represented in Holy Scripture as a thing considerably good, which may be regarded without blame, which sometimes in duty must be regarded. It is there preferred before other good things, in themselves not despicable. For, *A good name is better then precious ointment*; yea, *A good name is rather to be chosen then great riches*, (saith the Wise man.) 'Tis called a Gift of God: for, *There is a man* (saith the Preacher) *to whom God hath given riches and honour*. Yea, not onely a simple gift, but a Blessing, conferr'd in kindness, as a reward and encouragement of goodness: for, *By humility and the fear of the Lord*, saith he again, *are riches and honour*. Whence it is to be acknowledged as an especial benefit, and a fit ground of thanksgiving; as is practised by the Psalmist in his royal Hymn: *Honour* (saith he) *and Majesty hast thou laid upon him*. Wisdom also is described unto us bearing *in her left hand riches and honour*: and Wisdom surely will not take into any hand of hers, or hold therein, what is worth nothing. No, we are therefore moved to procure her,

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because

Prov. 4. 8. 9. *because, exalting her, she shall promote us.*

— *She shall give unto our head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory shall she deliver to us.* We are also enjoined

to render Honour as the best expression of good will and gratitude toward them who best deserve in themselves, or most deserve of us; to our Prince,

1 Pet. 2. 17.

1 Tim. 5. 3.

Philip. 2. 29.

to our Parents, to our Priests, (especially to such of them *as govern and teach well,*) to all good men, (*Have such in*

reputation, says the Apostle.) And were not Honour a good thing, such injunctions would be unreasonable. Yea, be-

cause we are obliged to bear good will toward all men, S. Peter bids us to ho-

1 Pet. 2. 17.

nour all men. From hence also, that we are especially bound to render Honour unto God himself, we may well infer

Aristot. Eth. IV. 3.

with Aristotle, that Honour is the best thing in our power to offer. To these

considerations may be added, that we are commanded to walk *δ'εξουσιν*,

Rom. 13. 13.

Rom. 12. 17.

(*decently*, or speciously, which implies

a regard to mens opinion;) to provide things *honest* in the sight of all men, (*τι καλὸν*, that is, not onely things good in substance, but goodly in appearance;) to have our conversation *honest* before the

1 Pet. 2. 12.

Gentiles, (*καλῶ* again, that is, fair, or comely,

comely, and plausible, such as may commend us and our profession to the judgment of them who observe us.)

S. Paul also exhorts us to *mind*, not one- Phil. 4. 8.

ly *what things are true, are just, are pure*; but also *ὅσα σεμνά*, (*what-ever things are venerable, or apt to beget respect,*) *ὅσα προσφιλέα*, (*what-ever things are lovely, or gracious in mens eyes and esteem,*) *ὅσα ἀνηγμένα*, (*what-ever things are well reported, or well reputed of.*)

He requires us not onely, *if there be any vertue, (any thing very good in it self,*) but, *if there be any praise, (any thing much approved in common esteem,*) that we should

mind such things. Lastly, the blessed state hereafter (the highest instance of Divine bounty, the compleat reward of goodness) is represented and recommended to us as a state of Honour and Glory; to be ambitious whereof is the character of a good man. *To every man* Rom. 2. 7.

(saith S. Paul) *shall God render according to his works: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek glory, and honour, and immortality, Eternal life.*

Such is the Reward propounded to us in it self; no vile or contemptible thing, but upon various accounts much

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valuable ; that which the common apprehensions of men, plain dictates of reason, a predominant instinct of nature, the judgments of very wise men, and Divine attestation it self conspire to commend unto us as very considerable and precious. Such a Reward our Text prescribes us the certain, the onely way of attaining.

2. Such a benefit is here tendred to us (that which yet more highly commends it, and exceedingly enhances its worth) by God himself: *I (saith he) will honour.* 'Tis sanctified by coming from his holy hand ; 'tis dignified by following his most wise and just disposal ; 'tis fortified and assured by depending on his unquestionable word, and uncontrollable power ; who as he is the prime Authour of all good, so he is in especial manner the sovereign dispenser of Honour. *The King (we say) is the fountain of Honour.* What any King, as the Representative and Delegate of God, is in his particular Kingdom, that is Almighty God absolutely and independently in all the world. *Both riches and honour (said good King David) come of thee, for thou rulest over all : in thine hand is power and might ; in thine hand it*

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it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. He whose grants are in effect onely sure and valid, whose favours onely do in the end turn to good account, he freely offers us most desirable preferment: he doth himself graciously hold forth most authentick patents, by virtue of which we may all become *right honourable*, and *persons of quality* indeed; having not onely the names and titles, the outward ensignes and badges of dignity, (such as earthly Princes conferre,) but the substantial reality, the assured enjoyment thereof. (For man can onely impose law upon tongues and gestures; God alone commandeth and inclineth hearts, wherein Honour chiefly resideth.) He offers it; I say, most freely indeed, yet not absolutely: he doth not goe to sell it for a price, yet he propounds it under a condition; as a most just and equal, so a very gentle and easie condition. 'Tis but an exchange of Honour for Honour; of honour from God; which is a free gift, for honour from us, which is a just duty; of honour from him our sovereign Lord, for honour from us his poor vassals; of honour from the most High Majesty of Heaven, for honour

from us vile worms creeping upon earth. Such an overture one would think it not onely reasonable to accept, but impossible to refuse. For can any man dare not to honour invincible Power, infallible Wisdom, inflexible Justice? will any man forbear to honour immense Goodness and Bounty? Yes, it seems there are men so mad as to reject so fair an offer, so bad as to neglect so equal a duty. Let us therefore consider what it is that is here required of us, or wherein this honouring of God consists, that we may thereby discern when we perform this duty, when we are deficient therein.

II. There are several ways of honoring God, or several parts and degrees of this Duty; all which we may referre to two sorts, conceiving the Duty as a compound made up of two main ingredients, (correspondent to those two parts in which they reside, and of which our nature consists; which distinction *S. Paul* suggests, when he saith, *Glorifie God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's,*) one of them being, as it were, the form and Soul, the other as the matter and Body of the Duty.

I. The Soul of that Honour which

is required of us toward God, is that internal esteem and reverence which we should bear in our hearts towards him ; importing that we have impressed upon our minds such conceptions about him as are worthy of him, suitable to the perfection of his nature, to the eminency of his state, to the just quality of his works and actions : that we apprehend him to be, what he really is, in his nature, superlatively good, wise, powerfull, holy, and just : that we ascribe unto him the production and conservation of all beings, together with an intire superintendency over and absolute disposal of all events : that we conceive our selves obliged to submit unto and acquiesce in all his dispensations of Providence, as most wise and most righteous ; to rely upon the declarations of his mind, (whether in way of assertion, or promise,) as infallibly true and certain. In such acts of mind the honouring of God doth primarily consist. In acts, I say : not in speculative Opinions concerning the Divine Excellencies, (such as all men have, who are not downright Atheists or Infidels,) floating in the fancy, or dormant in the mind ; but in continually-present, lively, effectual acts of

apprehension and judgment, sinking down into the heart and affections, and quickning them to a congruous real performance. Such an apprehension of God's Power, as shall make us to dread his irresistible hand, shall cause us to despair of prospering in bad courses, shall dispose us to confide in him, as able to perform what-ever he wills us to expect from him : such an opinion of his Wisdom, as shall keep us from questioning whether that is best which God declares to be so; as shall hinder us from presuming (in compliance with our own shallow reason, or vain fancy) to doe any thing against God's judgment and advice : such a conceit of God's Justice, as shall render us carefull to perform what his Law promises to reward, and fearfull to commit what it threatens to punish : such a persuasion concerning God's Goodness, as shall kindle in us an hearty affection toward him, shall make us very sensible of his bounty, and ready to yield returns of duty and gratitude unto him; as shall preserve us from being distrustfull of his Providence, or doubtfull in our need and distress of finding relief from him : such a vigorous and fruitfull esteem of
God

God in all respects, as shall produce in us dispositions of mind, and actions of life, agreeable to our various relations and obligations to him; becoming us as his creatures and children, as his subjects and servants. This is indeed the Soul of the duty, which being absent, all exterior (how specious soever) either professions or performances are but as pictures, having in them somewhat of resemblance in shape and colour, nothing of life: yea rather, as carcases, not onely dead and senseless, but rotten and filthy in God's sight.

This people (saith God) do honour me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Such honour is indeed no honour at all, but impudent abuse and profane mockery: for what can be more abominably vain, then for a man to court and cajoul him who knows his whole heart, who sees that he either minds not, or means not what he says? It behoves us therefore by all proper means (by contemplating the Works and actions of God, (his admirable works of Nature, the wise proceedings of his Providence, the glorious dispensations of his Grace) by meditating on his Word, by praying for his Grace, by ob-

Matt. 15. 8.

observing his Law and will) to raise up in our hearts, to foment and cherish this internal Reverence, which is the true spring of all Piety, the principle which forms and actuates that other sort, coming next to be touched on, being the Body of our due Honour to God; concurring in its order to the integrity thereof, as without which the interior part would be a kind of Ghost, too thin in substance, too remote from sense, too destitute of good fruit and use.

2. This Bodily part consists in outward expressions and performances, whereby we declare our esteem and reverence of God, and produce or promote the like in others. For our thus honouring God respects those two ends and effects; the uttering our own, the exciting in others a reverence toward him. And it we may first view in the general, or gross bulk thereof; then survey its principal members.

First, in general, God is honoured by a willing and carefull practice of all Piety and Vertue for conscience sake, or in avowed obedience to his holy will. This is the most natural expression of our Reverence toward him, and the most

most effectual way of promoting the same in others. A Subject cannot better demonstrate the Reverence he bears toward his Prince, then by (with a chearfull diligence) observing his Laws: for by so doing he declares that he acknowledgeth the Authority, and reve-
reth the Majesty which enacted them; that he approves the Wisdom which devised them, and the Goodness which designed them for publick benefit; that he dreads his Prince's Power, which can maintain them, and his Justice, which will vindicate them; that he relies upon his Fidelity, in making good what of protection or of recompence he propounds to the observers of them. No less pregnant a signification of our Reverence toward God do we yield in our gladly and strictly obeying his Laws; thereby evidencing our submission to God's sovereign Authority, our esteem of his Wisdom and Goodness, our awfull regard to his Power and Justice, our confidence in him, and dependence upon his word. As also the practice of wholesome Laws, visibly producing good fruits, (peace and prosperity in the commonwealth,) doth conciliate respect unto the Prince, he thereby appearing

appearing wise and good, able to discern,
 and willing to chuse what confers to
 publick benefit: so actions conformable
 to the Divine Law, being (by God's
 wise and gracious disposal) both in
 themselves comely and lovely, and in
 effect (as *S. Paul* saith) *good and pro-*
fitable to men, (conducing indeed not
 onely to private, but also to publick
 welfare, to the rendring humane Soci-
 ety comfortable, to the settling and se-
 curing common tranquillity,) the per-
 formance of them must needs bring
 great commendation to the authour and
 ordainer of them. By observing them
 we shall (as *S. Peter* speaks) *set forth*
the vertues of him that called us to such a
 practice. The light and lustre of good
 works, done in regard to Divine com-
 mand, will cause men to see clearly the
 Excellencies of our most wise and graci-
 ous Lord; will consequently induce
 and excite them *to glorifie our Father*
which is in Heaven. In this (saith our
 Saviour) *is my Father glorified, if you*
bear much fruit. The goodness to the
 sight, the pleasantness to the tast, which
 is ever perceptible in those fruits which
 genuine Piety beareth, the beauty men
 see in a calm mind and a sober conver-
 sation,

TIT. 3. 8.

NEH. 9. 13.

DEUT. 10. 13.

1 PET. 2. 9.

MATT. 5. 16.

JOH. 15. 8.

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sation, the sweetness they tast from works of justice and charity, will certainly produce veneration to the Doctrine which teacheth such things, and to the Authority which enjoyns them. It is an aggravation of Impiety, often insisted upon in Scripture, that it slurs (as it were) and defames God, brings reproach and obloquy upon him, causes his Name to be profaned, to be cursed, to be blasphemed: and 'tis answerably a commendation of Piety, that by the practice thereof we (not onely procure many great advantages to our selves, many blessings and comforts here, all joys and felicities hereafter; but do also thereby) beget esteem to God himself, and sanctifie his ever-blessed Name; cause him to be regarded and revered, his Name to be praised and blessed among men. It is by exemplary Piety, by ** providing things honest in the sight of all men*, by doing things honourable and laudable, (such are all things which God hath been pleased to command us,) that we shall be sure to fulfill that precept of S. Paul, of *doing all things to the glory of God*; which is the Body of that duty we speak of.

Secondly, But there are, deserving a
par-

Rom. 2. 23.
Tit. 2. 5.
2 Sam. 12.
14.
Isa. 52. 5.
Ezek. 36. 20.

Eph. 4. 1.
Phil. 1. 27.
Colos. 1. 10.
1 Thes. 2. 12.

* Rom. 12.
17.

1 Cor. 10.
31.

particular inspection, some members thereof, which in a peculiar and eminent manner do constitute this Honour; some acts which more signally conduce to the illustration of God's glory. Such are,

1. The frequent and constant performance (in a serious and reverent manner) of all religious Duties, or Devotions immediately addressed to God, or conversant about him: that which the Psal. 29. 2. Psalmist styles, *Giving the Lord the honour due to his Name, worshipping the Lord in the beauty of Holiness.*

2. Using all things peculiarly related unto God (his holy Name, his holy Word, his holy Places, (the places *where his honour dwelleth*,) his holy Times, Isa. 58. 13. religious Fasts and Festivities,) with especial respect.

3. Yielding due observance to the Rom. 13. 4. Deputies and Ministers of God (both Mal. 2. 7. Civil and Ecclesiastical) as such, or because of their relation to God: the doing of which God declares that he interprets and accepts as done unto himself. 1 Sam. 8. 7. Matt. 10. 40. Joh. 13. 20.

4. Freely spending what God hath given us (out of respect unto him) in 2 Cor. 9. 13. works of Piety, Charity, and Mercy; that

that which the *Wise man* calls *Honouring the Lord with our substance.* Prov. 3. 9. 14. 31.

5. All penitential Acts, by which we submit unto God, and humble our selves before him. (As *Achan*, by confessing of his sin, is said to give glory to the Lord God of Israel.) Josh. 7. 19. Apoc. 16. 9.

6. Chearfull undergoing afflictions, losses, disgraces, for the profession of God's truth, or for obedience to God's commands. (As *S. Peter* is said by his death, suffered upon such accompts, to glorifie God.) Joh. 21. 19.

These signal instances of this duty (represented as such in Holy Scripture) for brevities sake I passe over; craving leave onely to consider one, most pertinent to our present business, and indeed a very comprehensive one; which is this:

7. We shall especially honour God, by discharging faithfully those offices which God hath intrusted us with; by improving diligently those talents which God hath committed to us; by using carefully those means and opportunities, which God hath vouchsafed us, of doing him service, and promoting his glory. Thus he to whom God hath given Wealth, if he expend it (not to the nourish-

nourishment of pride and luxury, not onely to the gratifying his own pleasure or humour, but) to the furtherance of God's honour, or to the succour of his indigent neighbour, (in any pious or charitable way,) he doth thereby in especiall manner honour God. He also on whom God hath bestowed Wit and parts, if he employ them (not so much in contriving projects to advance his own petty interests, or in procuring vain applause to himself, as) in advantageously setting forth God's praise, handsomely recommending goodness, dexterously engaging men in ways of vertue, (doing which things is true wit and excellent policy indeed,) he doth thereby remarkably honour God. He likewise that hath Honour conferr'd upon him, if he subordinate it to God's honour, if he use his own credit as an instrument of bringing credit to goodness, thereby adorning and illustrating Piety, he by so doing doth eminently practise this duty. The like may be said of any other good quality, any capacity or advantage of doing good; by the right use thereof we honour God: for that men, beholding the worth of such good gifts, and feeling the benefit emergent from
from

from them, will be apt to bless the do-
nour of them ; as did they in the Go-
spel, who, seeing our Saviour cure the
Paralytick man, did presently glorifie *Matt. 9. 8.*
God, who had given such power unto men.

But especially they to whom Power and
Authority is committed, as they have
the chief capacity, so they are under an
especial obligation thus to honour God :
they are particularly concerned to hear
and observe that Royall proclamation,
Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give *Psal. 29. 1, 2.*
unto the Lord glory and strength ; Give
unto the Lord the honour due unto his
name. When such persons (like King

Nebuchadnezzar returned to his right
senses) do seriously acknowledge their
power and eminency derived from God
alone ; when they profess subjection
unto him, and express it in their practice,
not onely driving others by their pow-
er, but drawing them by their example,
to piety and goodness ; when they cause
God's Name to be duly worshipped,
and his Laws to be strictly observed ;
when they favour and encourage Ver-
tue, discourage and chastise wickedness ;
when they take care that justice be im-
partially administred, innocence pro-
tected, necessity relieved, all iniquity

Dan. 4. 34.
I blessed the
most High,
and praised
and honoured
him, &c.

L

and

and oppression, all violence and disorder, yea, (so much as may be) all affliction and wretchedness be prevented, or removed; when they by all means strive to promote both the service of

Matt. 24. 45. God, and the happiness of men; (*dispensing* equally and benignly, to the family over which their Lord hath set them, *their meat in due season*; providing that

1 Tim. 2. 2. men under them *may live a peaceable and quiet life in all godliness and honesty*; doing which is the business allotted to them, the interest (as it were) of God, which he declares himself concernedly to tender, and by their ministry to prosecute:) when they carefully doe such things, then do they indeed approve themselves worthy honourers of their High Master, and Heavenly King; then do they truly act God's part, and represent his person decently. When the actions of these visible Gods are so divinely good and beneficial, men will be easily induced, yea, can hardly forbear to reverence and magnifie the invisible Founder of their Authority. By so doing, as they will set before mens eyes the best pattern of Loyalty; as they will impress upon mens hearts the strongest argument for Obedience and respect

respect toward themselves ; as they shall both more plainly inform, and more effectually persuade people to the performance of their duty unto them, then by all the law and all the force in the world ; as they will thereby consequently best secure and maintain their own honour, and their own welfare : (for men will never be heartily loyal, and submissive to Authority , till they become really good ; nor will they ever be very good, till they see their Leaders such :) so they will together greatly advance the praise and glory of Him in whose name they rule , to whose favour they owe their power and dignity ; *in whose hand* (as the Prophet saith) *Dan. 5. 23.* *is their breath , and whose are all their ways.* For all men will be ready most awfully to dread Him, unto whom they see Princes themselves humbly to stoop and bow : no man will be ashamed or unwilling to serve Him, whom he shall observe that his Lords and Governours do concern themselves to worship : the world cannot but have a good opinion of Him, a participation of whose power and majesty yields such excellent fruits ; it will not fail to adore Him, whose shadows and images are so venerable. 'Tis

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a most notorious thing, both to reason and in experience, what extreme advantage Great persons have, especially by the influence of their practice, to bring God himself, as it were, into credit; how much it is in their power easily to render Piety a thing in fashion and request. For in what they do, they never are alone, or are ill attended; whither they goe, they carry the world along with them: they lead crowds of people after them, as well when they goe in the right way, as when they run astray. The custom of living well, no less then other modes and garbs, will be soon convey'd and propagated from the Court; the City and Country will readily draw good manners thence, (good manners truly so called, not only superficial forms of civility, but real practices of goodness.) For the main body of men goeth not *quà eundum*, *sed quà itur*, not according to rules and reasons, but after examples and authorities; especially of great persons, who are like stars, shining in high and conspicuous places, by which men steer their course: their actions are to be reckon'd not as single or solitary ones, but are, like their persons, of a publick and representative nature,

nature, involving the practice of others, who are by them awed, or shamed into compliance. Their good example especially hath this advantage, that men can find no excuse, can have no pretence why they should not follow it. Piety is not onely beautified, but fortified by their dignity; it not onely shines in them with a clearer lustre, but with a mightier force and influence: a word, a look (the least intimation) from them will doe more good, then others best eloquence, clearest reason, most earnest endeavours. For it is in them, if they would apply themselves to it, as the wisest Prince implies, to *scatter iniquity with their eyes.* Prov. 20. 8. A smile of theirs were able to enliven Vertue, and diffuse it all about; a frown might suffice to mortifie and dissipate wickedness. Such apparently is their power of honouring God; and in proportion thereto surely great is their obligation to doe it: of them peculiarly God expects it, and all equity exacts it. What the meaner rank of servants (who are employ'd in baser drudgeries, whose fare is more course, whose wages are more scant, who stand at greater distance from their Lord, and receive no such ample or ex-

press marks of his favour, what these) doe is of some consequence indeed, but doth not import so much to the Master's reputation; their good word concerning him, their good carriage toward him doth not credit him so much. But those whom he employs in matters of highest trust, and importance to his affairs, whom he places in the nearest degree unto himself, (seats even in his own throne, upon his own tribunal,) whom he feeds plentifully and daintily, maintains in a handsome garb, allows largely, as their deportment doth much reflect on their Lord's esteem, as they are highly capable of advancing his repute; so all the rules of ingenuity and gratitude, all the laws of justice and equity do oblige them earnestly to endeavour it. And it is indeed no less their concernment to doe so. For if there be disorders, prejudicial to the Master's honour and interest, frequently committed in the family, 'tis those servants must be responsible: if due order be there kept to his glory and advantage, they shall chiefly be commended, and peculiarly hear the *Engage, bone serve*. They must be loaded with other mens faults, or crowned for other mens ver-

Matt. 25. 23.
Luk. 12. 48.

vertues, as their behaviour hath respectively contributed to them. Those universal Rules of equity, proposed in the Gospel, will, in God's reckoning with and requiring men, be punctually observed: *To whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required*: answerable to the improvement of what is delivered in trust, shall the acceptance be.

I have insisted somewhat more largely on this point, because our Text hath a particular aspect thereon; the words being uttered upon occasion of *Eli*, then Judge in *Israel*, his not using authority to these purposes; his forbearing to redress a grievous abuse, committed by his own Sons, to the disservice and dishonour of God. Whence to persons of his rank is this law especially directed; upon them is this duty chiefly incumbent; on them assuredly, (as sure as God is true,) if they will observe the Duty, the Reward shall be conferred. God will certainly not only preserve the Honour they have already, but will accumulate more Honours on them.

These are general Truths; the particular application of them is ours. God, I pray, vouchsafe his grace and blessing,

that it may be made to our benefit and comfort.

III. I should now shew why the Duty is required of us, or how reasonable it is. I must not (and the matter is so palpable that I need not) spend many words on that. God surely doth not exact Honour from us because he needs it, because he is the better for it, because he (for its self) delights therein. For (beside that he cannot want any thing without himself, that he cannot anywise need mortal breath to praise him, or hands of flesh to serve him, who hath millions of better creatures than we absolutely at his devotion, and can with a word create millions of millions more fitter than we to honour him) the best estimation we can have of him is much below him; the best expression we can make is very unworthy of him. He is infinitely excellent beyond what we can imagine or declare: *his Name is exalted above all blessing and praise; his glory is above the earth and heaven.* So that all our endeavours to honour him are, in comparison to what is due, but defects, and in a manner disparagements to him. 'Tis onely then (which should affect

Ἀλλήλῳ
 ὁ αὐτὸς ἡ
 σία καὶ ἀνε-
 στήσας, ἐ-
 στήσας ἐπὶ
 στήσας ἐπὶ
 ὁ αὐτὸς
 αὐτὸν λαμ-
 βάνει γί-
 νον. Chryf.
 in Psal. 144.
 Et vide in
 Psal. 103.

Nehem. 9. 5.
 Psal. 148. 13.
 Eccles. 43.
 30.

affect our ingenuity to consider) his pure goodness, that moves him, for our benefit and advantage, to demand it of us.

1. For that to honour God is the most proper work of Reason; that for which primarily we were design'd and framed: (for as other things were made to afford the matter and occasion, so Man was designed to exercise the act of glorifying God:) whence the performance thereof doth preserve and perfect *Sen. Ep. 76.* our nature; to neglect it being unnatural and monstrous.

2. For that also it is a most pleasant duty. He is not a man (hath lost all natural ingenuity and humanity) who doth not delight to make some returns thither, where he hath found much good will, whence he hath felt great kindness. Since then all the good we have, we have received from God's favour, it cannot but be very pleasant to render somewhat of requital (as it were) unto him; and we can render no other but this. We cannot make God more rich, more joyfull, more happy then he is: all that we can doe is, to express our reverence toward him.

3. For

3. For that likewise our honouring God disposes us to the imitation of him, (for what we do reverence we would resemble,) that is, to the doing those things wherein our chief perfection and happiness consists, whence our best content and joy doth spring.

4. In fine, for that the practice of this duty is most profitable and beneficial to us ; unto it by an eternal rule of justice our final welfare and prosperity being annexed : whence God hath declared it to be the way and condition of our attaining that thing which we so like and prize, Honour to our selves ; the which by promise he hath engaged himself to confer on those who honour him. And,

IV. This promise he makes good several ways : Some of them I shall briefly suggest.

I. The honouring God is of it self an honourable thing ; the employment which ennobles Heaven it self, wherein the highest Angels do rejoyce and glory. 'Tis the greatest honour of a Servant to bring credit to his Master, of a Subject to spread his Prince's renown, and (upon grounds vastly more obliging) of a Crea-

Creature to glorifie his Maker: that we may doe so is an honour we should be glad, may be proud of.

2. By honouring God we are immediately instated in great Honour; we enter into most noble relations, acquire most illustrious titles, enjoy most glorious privileges: we become the friends and favourites of Heaven, are adopted into God's family, and are styled his Children; do obtain a free access unto him, a sure protection under him, a ready assistance from him in all our needs. And what honour can exceed, can equal this?

3. God hath so ordered it, that Honour is naturally consequent upon the honouring him. God hath made Goodness a noble and a state-ly thing; hath impressed upon it that beauty and majesty which commands an universal love and veneration, which strikes presently both a kindly and an awfull respect into the minds of all men. *The Prov. 12.26.*
righteous is (not onely in himself, but in common esteem) *more excellent then*

Τίς γὰρ πλησίον τιμῶν
 ἐν τῇ φωνῇ χροῖται
 ὁ, ὅς, Naz. Orat. de
 Paup.

*Is gloria maximè excel-
 lit, qui virtute plurimùm
 præstat. Cic.*

Καὶ ἀληθεύει ὁ ἀγαθὸς
 μὲν τῷ πᾶσι. Aristot.
 Eth. 4. 3.

*Adè gratiosa virtus est,
 ut infirmum sit etiam malis
 probare meliora. Sen. de Be-
 nef. 4. 17.*

his

his neighbour. Power may be dreaded, Riches may be courted, Wit and Knowledge may be admired; but onely Goodness is truly esteemed and honoured. Not onely men of goodness and discretion, but even the vulgar sort of men (yea, as *Plato* hath well observed, the worst men) do pass this judgment, do prefer true Goodness above all things.

Θῆδον π κα
εὐσεχόν δει
κα τοῖς κα-
κοῖς. ὥστε
πάντοιοι τ
σθεδρα κα-
κῶν εἰ πῖς
λόγοις κα τ
δξαις διαμενῖναι τοῦ ἀμείνους τῶν ἀνθρώπων, κα τοῦ χείρους. Plat.
de Repub. XII.

4. God by his extraordinary providence, as there is reason and occasion, doth interpose, so as to procure Honour to them, to maintain and further their reputation, who honour him. God

Psal. 33. 15. *fashioneth the hearts of men: The hearts*
Prov. 21. 1. *of the greatest men are in his hand; he*
turneth them as the rivers of waters, whi-
thersoever he will: he consequently rai-
seth or depresseth us, as he pleases, in the
Prov. 16. 7. *judgments and affections of men. When*
a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh
even his enemies to be at peace with him,
saith the Wise man; that is, he disposeth
the most averse minds to love and ho-
nour him. No envy can supplant, no
slander can deface the credit of such a
person; since God hath taken it into
his

his charge and care, since he hath said it,
 that *he will bring forth his righteousness* Psal. 37. 6.
as the light, and his judgment as the
noon-day. God also by secret methods,
 and undiscernible trains, ordereth all e-
 vents, managing our thoughts and de- Psal. 30. 7.
 signs, our enterprizes and actions so, & 90. 17.
 that the result of them shall be matter of
 benefit, comfort, and reputation, or of
 disaster, regret, and disgrace, as he
 thinks good. Victory and success he ab-
 solutely disposeth of, and consequently
 of the Honour that follows them; and
 they do usually attend the honourers of
 God: for (as it is in the Psalm) *A good* Psal. 111. 10.
success have they who keep his command- Prov. 3. 4.
ments. Many are the instances of per-
 sons (such as *Abraham, Joseph, Moses,*
David, Job and Daniel) who, for their
 signal honouring of God, from a base
 and obscure, or from an afflicted and for-
 lorn condition, have, in ways strange
 and wonderfull, been advanced to emi-
 nent dignity, have been rendred most
 illustrious, by the providence of him
 who *raiseth the poor out of the dust, and* 1 Sam. 2. 8.
lifteth the beggar out of the dunghill, to Psal. 107. 41.
set them among Princes, and to make
them inherit the throne of glory. He
 doeth it in an evident manner, and emi-
 nent

nent degree, to some; he doeth it in a convenient way, and competent measure, to all that honour him.

5. Whereas men are naturally inclined to bear much regard to the judgment of Posterity concerning them, are desirous to leave a Good name behind them, and to have their memory retained in esteem: God so disposes things,

Prov. 10. 7. that *the memory of the just shall be blessed*;

Psal. 112. 6. *that his righteousness shall be had in*

Prov. 13. 9. *everlasting remembrance*; that *his light*

shall rejoyce, (or burn clearly

and pleasantly, even when

his life is put out here.) No

spices can so embalm a man,

no monument can so pre-

serve his name and memo-

ry, as a pious conversation,

whereby God hath been ho-

noured, and men benefited.

The fame of such a person is, in the best judgments, far more precious and truly glorious, then is the fame of those who have excelled in any other deeds or qualities. For what sober man doth not in his thoughts afford a more high and hearty respect to those poor Fishermen, who by their heroical activity and patience did honour God in the

pro-

Ἀνέγκη, ὡς ἔοικε, μί-
λειν ἡμῖν καὶ τῇ ἐπειρᾷ χρο-
νῷ. ἐπειδὴ καὶ τυγχάνουσιν
καὶ ἄπνα εὖσιν οἱ τῷ ἀνδρα-
ποδωδέσασιν, ὡδὲν φρονι-
ζοῦντες αὐτοῖς, οἱ δ' ἐπιμ-
νήσασιν, πᾶν ποιῶντες ὅ-
πως ἀνέως τὸν ἐπειρᾷ χρο-
νον εὖ ἀκώσιν. Plat. E-
pist. 2.

propagation of his heavenly Truth, then to all those *Heroes* in Chivalry, those Conquerours and atchievers of mighty exploits, (those *Alexanders* and *Cæsars*) who have been renowned for doing things which seemed great, rather than for performing what was truly good? To the honour of those excellent poor men conspicuous monuments have been erected every-where; anniversary memorials of their names and vertues are celebrated; they are never mentioned or thought of without respect; their commendations are interwoven with the praises of their great Lord and Maker, whom they honoured.

Τῶν δὲ δούλων τοῦ Χριστοῦ
καὶ τὰ σῶματα λαμπρὰ, καὶ
ἡμῖνες καταφανέες, ἵερτυ
τῇ οἰκτιρῇ ποιῶσι, &c.
Chrys. in 2 Cor. Or. 27.

6. Lastly, to those who honour God here, God hath reserved an Honour infinitely great and excellent, in comparison whereto all Honours here are but dreams, the loudest acclamations of mortal men are but empty sounds, the brightest glories of this world are but duskish and fleeting shadows; an honour most solid, most durable; *an eternal weight of glory.* They shall in the face of all the world be approved by the most righteous Judge his unquestionable

2 Cor. 4. 17.

nable Sentence; they shall be esteemed in the unanimous opinion of Angels and Saints; they shall be applauded by the general voice and attestation of Heaven; they shall then be seated upon unmovable Thrones, their heads encircled with unfading Crowns, their faces shining with rays of unconceivable Glory and majesty. The less of Honour they have received here, in this transitory moment of life, the more thereof they shall enjoy in that future eternal state: where, with him who, through
 Joh. 8. 49, 50. *the whole course of his life, sought not his own honour, but the honour of him that sent him; who, for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set at the right hand of God; with those who consecrated all their endeavours, and who sacrificed their lives to the promoting of God's Honour, they shall possess everlasting glory. Which, together with them, God Almighty of his infinite mercy grant unto us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost, be for ever all Honour and Praise. Amen.*

The



The Fifth Sermon.



PROV. 10. 9.

He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.

THE world is much addicted to the Politicks; the heads of men are very busie in contrivance, and their mouths are full of talk about the ways of consulting our safety, and securing our interests. May we not therefore presume, that an infallible Maxim of Policy, proposing the most expedite and certain method of security in all our transactions, will be entertained with acceptance? Such an one the greatest Politician and wisest man for business (if we may take God's own word for it) that ever was, or will be, doth here suggest to us. For the practice couched in our Text he otherwise voucheth for a point of Policy, telling us, that *A man of understanding walketh uprightly*: and here he recommendeth

1 King. 3. 12.

Prov. 15. 21.

M

it

it as a method of Security, *He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.*

Treating upon which *Aphorism*, I shall, by God's help, endeavour, first, in way of Explication, briefly to describe the practice it self; then, in way of Proof, by some Considerations to declare, that Security doth attend it.

For Explication. *To walk* (as well in the style of Holy Scripture, as in other Writings, and even in common speech) doth signifie our usual course of dealing, or the constant tenour of our practice.

כח *Uprightly*, according to the original, might be rendred, *in perfection*, or, *with integrity*: And by the Greek Translators in several places is supposed chiefly to denote Sincerity and Purity of intention.

In effect, the Phrase, *He that walketh uprightly*, doth import, One who is constantly disposed in his designs and dealings to bear a principal regard to the rules of his Duty, and the dictates of his Conscience; who in every case emergent is ready to perform that, which upon good deliberation doth appear most just and fit, in conformity to God's Law and sound Reason, without being sway-
ed

He that walketh in his uprightness, feareth the Lord. Prov. 14. 2.

ed by any appetite, any passion, any sinister respect to his own private interest of profit, credit, or pleasure, to the commission of any unlawfull, irregular, unworthy or base act; who generally doth act out of good principles; (namely, reverence to God, charity to men, sober regard to his own true welfare;) who doth aim at good ends, that is, at God's honour, publick benefit, his own Salvation, other good things subordinate to those, or well consistent with them; who doth prosecute his designs by lawfull means, in fair ways, such as honest providence and industry, veracity and fidelity, dependence upon God's help, and prayer for his blessing: In short; One who never advisedly doth undertake any bad thing, nor any good thing to ill purposes; nor doth use any foul means to compass his intents.

For Proof. That such an one doth ever proceed with much security, from the following Considerations may appear.

I. An upright walker is secure of easily finding his way. For it commonly requireth no reach of wit or depth of judgment, no laborious diligence of enquiry,

quity, no curious intentness of observation, no solicitous care, or plodding study, to discern in any case what is just ; we need not much trouble our heads about it, for we can hardly be to seek for it. If we will but open our eyes, it lieth in view before us, being the plain, straight, obvious road, which common Reason prompteth, or which ordinary Instruction pointeth out to us: so that usually that direction of Solomon is sufficient, *Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eye-lids look straight before thee— Turn not to the right hand, nor to the left.*

Prov. 4. 25,
27. & 17. 24.
& 14. 6.

The ways of iniquity and vanity, (if we may call them *ways*, which indeed are but exorbitancies and seductions from the way,) ill designs, and bad means of executing designs, are very unintelligible, very obscure, abstruse and intricate ; being infinitely various, and utterly uncertain : so that out of them to pick and fix on this or that, may puzzle our heads, and perplex our hearts ; as to pursue any of them, may involve us in great difficulty and trouble. But the ways of Truth, of Right, of Vertue, are so very simple and uniform, so fixed and permanent, so clear
and

and notorious, that we can hardly miss them, or (except wilfully) swerve from them. For they by Divine wisdom were chalked out, not onely for ingenious and subtle persons, (men of great parts, of refined wits, of long experience,) but rather for the vulgar community of men, the great Body of God's subjects, consisting in persons of meanest capacity, and smallest improvement: being designed to *make wise the*

simple, to give the young man knowledge and discretion; to direct all sorts of people in their duty, toward their happiness; according to that in the Prophet, *A high way shall be there, and it shall be called the way of Holiness—the wayfaring-men, though fools, shall not erre therein.* Psal. 119. 7. & 119. 130. Prov. 8. 5. Prov. 1. 4. Psal. 119. 9. Isa. 35. 8. Ods. 29. 9. LXX.

They are in very legible characters graven by the finger of God upon our hearts and consciences, so that by any considerate reflexion inwards we may easily reade them: or they are extant in God's Word, there written as with a Sun-beam, so perspicuously expressed, so frequently inculcated, that without gross negligence or strange dulness we cannot but descry them. For who with half an eye may not see, that the prac-

tice of pious love and reverence toward God, of entire justice and charity toward our neighbour, of sober temperance and purity toward our selves, is approved by Reason, is prescribed by God to us?

Hence in the Holy Scriptures, as bad

Prov. 4. 19. & 2. 13, 15.

Joh. 8. 12. Psal. 82. 5. &

125. 5. & 35. 6. & 73. 18.

Jer. 23. 12.

* Heb. 12. 13. Psal. 5. 8.

Luke 3. 5. Prov. 3. 23.

Deut. 5. 32. & 28. 14.

|| Prov. 4. 18.

Prov. 8. 8, 9. & 14. 6.

Πάντα ἐνώμα τοῖς σὺν-
18 η, LXX.

Psal. 26. 12.

Psal. 37. 31. & 26. 1. &

17. 5. & 18. 35.

ways are called dark, crooked, rough, slippery ways; so the good ways are said to be * clear, plain, direct, even ways. || *The path of the just (say they) is as a shining light. All the words of my mouth are plain to him that understandeth, (or, that considereth them.) My foot standeth in an even place. The Law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.*

Hence it is affirmed, that an upright man doth hardly need any conduct be-

Prov. 11. 3. side his own honesty. For, *The integrity (saith Solomon) of the upright shall*

Prov. 11. 5. *guide them; and, The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way.*

But in case such an one should ever be at a stand or at a loss, in doubt of his course, he hath always at hand a most sure guide to conduct or direct him. It

is but asking the way of him, or saying, with the Psalmist, *Shew me thy ways, O Lord, teach me thy paths; Teach me to doe thy will, and, Lead me in the way everlasting; O let me not wander from thy commandments*: and then *his ears (as the Prophet saith) shall hear a word behind him saying, *This is the way, walk you in it*; then the words of the Psalmist shall be verified, *What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall chuse. The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek he will teach his way.*

Psal. 25. 4.
& 16. 11. &
17. 5.
Psal. 143. 10.
& 139. 24. &
119. 27.
Psal. 119. 10.
27. 33. 35.
&c.
* Isa. 30. 21.
Psal. 25. 9,
12. & 37. 23.

Hence is the upright man happily secured from tiring pains in the search, from racking anxieties in the choice, from grating scruples and galling regrets in the pursuit of his way.

II. The upright walker doth tread (Prov. 12. 5.) upon firm ground. He doth build his practice, not upon the perillous bogs, the treacherous quagmires, the devouring quick-sands of uncouth, bold, impious Paradoxes, (such as have been vented by *Epicurus*, by *Machiavel*, by others more lately, whose infamous names are too well known, as the effects of their pestilent notions are too

much felt ;) but upon solid, safe, approved, and well-tried principles ; viz. these, and the like coherent with them : That there is an eternal God , incomprehensibly powerfull, wise, just, and good ; who is always present with us, and ever intent upon us ; viewing not onely all our external actions, (open and secret,) but our inmost cogitations, desires , and intentions , by the which our actions chiefly are to be estimated : That He , as Governour of the world, and Judge of men, doth concern himself in all humane affairs, disposing and managing all events according to his righteous pleasure ; exacting punctual obedience to his laws, and dispensing recompences answerable thereto ; with impartial justice rewarding each man according to the purposes of his heart, and the practices of his life : That all our good and happiness doth absolutely depend on God's favour ; so that to please him can onely be true wisdom, and to offend him the great folly : That Vertue is incomparably the best endowment whereof we are capable, and Sin the worst mischief to which we are liable : That no worldly good or evil is considerable in comparison with
goods

goods or evils spiritual : That nothing can be really profitable or advantageous to us , which doth not consist with our duty to God , doth not some-wise conduce to our spiritual interest , and eternal welfare : yea, That every thing not serviceable to those purposes is either a frivolous trifle , or a dangerous snare, or a notable damage, or a wo-full bane to us : That content of mind , springing from innocence of life , from the faithfull discharge of our duty, from satisfaction of Conscience, from a good hope in regard to God and our future state , is in our esteem and choice much to be preferred before all the delights which any temporal possession or fruition can afford : and, That a bad mind is the sorest adversity which can befall us. Such are the grounds of upright practice, more firm then any rock, more unshakeable then the foundations of heaven and earth ; the which are assured by the Sacred Oracles, and attested by many remarkable Providences ; have ever been avowed by the wiser sort , and admitted by the general consent of men, as for their truth, most agreeable to Reason, and for their usefulness, approved by constant experience. The
belief

belief of them having apparently most wholesome influence upon all the concerns of life, both publick and private; indeed, being absolutely needfull for upholding Government, and preserving humane Society; no obligation, no faith or confidence between men, no friendship or peace being able to subsist without it. Whence the practice built on such foundations must be very secure. And if God shall not cease to be, if he will not let go the reins, if his Word cannot deceive, if the wisest men are not infatuated, if the common sense of mankind do not prove extravagant, if the main props of life and pillars of Society do not fail; he that walketh uprightly, doth proceed on sure grounds.

III. The upright person doth walk steddily, maintaining his principal resolutions, and holding his main course, through all occasions, without flinching or wavering, or desultory inconsistency and fickleness; his integrity being an excellent ballast, holding him tight and well-poised in his deportment; so that waves of temptation dashing on him do not make him roll in uncertainty,

ty, or topple over into unworthy practices.

Lust, passion, humour, interest, are things very mutable, as depending upon temper of body; casualties of time, the winds and tides of this vertiginous world: whence he that is guided or moved by them must needs be *many-* Jam. 1. 8.
*minde*d, and *unstable in all his ways*; will *reel to and fro like a drunken man*, Psal. 107. 27.
and be at his wit's ends; never enjoying any settled rest of mind, or observing a smooth tenour of action. But good Conscience is very stable, and persisteth unvaried through all circumstances of time, in all vicissitudes of fortune. For it steereth by immovable pole-stars, the inviolable rules of duty; it aimeth at marks which no force can stir out of their place; its objects of mind and affection are not transitory; its hopes and confidences are fixed on *the rock of ages*. Whence an upright person in all cases, and all conditions, (prosperous or adverse,) is the same man, and goeth the *Tetragrammaton*.
same way. Contingencies of affairs do not *Iustum & tenacem propositi virum,*
unhinde his mind from its good purposes, or divert his foot from the right *&c. Hor.*
course. Let the weather be fair or foul, let the world smile or frown, let him
get

2 Cor. 6. 8.

Psal. 112.

7, 8.

Prov. 3. 25.

Prov. 16. 3.

get or lose by it, let him be favoured or crossed, commended or reproached, (*by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report,*) he will doe what his duty requireth: the external state of things must not alter the moral reason of things with him. This is that which the Psalmist observeth of him; *He shall not be afraid of evil tidings, for his heart standeth fast, and believeth in the Lord. His heart is stablished, and will not shrink.* And this the *Wise man* promiseth to him; *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.*

Hence a man is secured from diffidence in himself, and distraction in his mind, from frequently being off the hooks, from leading an unequal life, clashing with it self, from deluding and disappointing those with whom he converseth or dealeth, and consequently from the inconveniencies issuing thence.

IV. The way of Uprightness is the surest for dispatch, and the shortest cut toward the execution or attainment of any good purpose; securing a man from irksome expectations and tedious delays, the which (as the *Wise man* saith) *do make the heart sick.*

It

It in Scripture is called *the straight* Luk. 3. 5. *and the plain way*. And as in Geometry, of all lines or surfaces contained within the same bounds, the straight line and the plain surface are the shortest; so it is also in morality: by the right line of Justice, upon the plain ground of Virtue, a man soonest will arrive to any well-chosen end.

In this way there are no bewildring intrigues and mazes, no crooked windings and turnings, no occasions forcing men to dance hither and thither, to skip backward and forward, to doe and undoe; which courses do protract business, and commonly do hinder from ever dispatching it. But a man acting justly and fairly, doth continually proceed on in the direct open road, without retreat, excursion, or deflexion; *not turning aside* (as the phrase is in Holy Writ) *to the right hand, or to the left*. Prov. 4. 27. Deut. 5. 32. & 28. 14.

To clamber over fences of Duty, to break through hedges of Right, to trespass upon hallowed enclosures, may seem the most short and compendious ways of getting thither where one would be: But doth not a man venture breaking his neck, or scratching his face, incurring mischief and trouble there-

- thereby? Is he not liable to the fate to which the Preacher doometh him, cles 10. 8. *He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it: and whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him?* For instance, to grow rich, fraud, extortion, corruption, oppression, over-reaching and supplanting may seem the readiest and most expedite ways; but in truth they are the farthest ways about, or rather no ways at all: for that which is got by those means is not our own; nor is the possession of it truly wealth, but usurpation, or detention of spoil and rapine, which we ought to disgorge. And however, to the getting it there are often mighty difficulties occurring from men, there are commonly insuperable obstacles interposed by God; who hath expressly condemned and cursed those ways, declaring, that *Wealth gotten by vanity* (or Prov. 13. 11. *cozenage*) *shall be diminished*; that *He that oppresseth to encrease his riches, shall surely come to want*; that *He who* (thus) Prov. 28. 22, 20. & 13. 11. & 21. 6. *hasteth to be rich, hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him*; that, *As the partrich sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not: so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end*

end shall be a fool. Whereas the plain way of honest harmless industry, (joyned with a pious regard to him who is the dispenser of all good things,) how slow soever it may seem, is the most speedy, because the onely safe, way to thrive; having, beside all secondary advantages, the security of those Oracles; *The hand of the diligent shall make rich: He that gathereth by labour, shall increase: By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life.*

Prov. 10. 4.
& 28. 19.
Prov. 13. 11.
Prov. 22. 4.
Psal. 112. 3.

V. The way of Uprightness is in it self very safe, free of danger, tending to no mischief; according to those sayings of the *Wise man*; *There shall no evil happen to the just: In the way of righteousness is life; and in the path thereof there is no death.*

Prov. 28. 18.
Prov. 16. 17.
& 13. 6. &
10. 29.
Prov. 12. 21.
Prov. 12. 28.

He who designeth onely that which is just and reasonable, who innocently and fairly prosecuteth his intent, can run no great hazzard, cannot fall into any extreme disaster, cannot irrecoverably sink into miserable disappointment.

Psal. 37. 24.

He probably will not receive much harm from men, or trouble from the world: for, as he meaneth innocently,

as

as he dealeth inoffensively, (not violently assailing, not fraudulently circumventing, not any-wise injuriously or maliciously abusing any man,) as he doth yield no just provocation or urgent temptation to oppose him; so he is not very likely to meet with obstructions or crosses thwarting his designs. He can hardly raise up adversaries; at least such as will prove very formidable, or very fierce and implacable toward him.

He may be sure that few wise men, and no good men will trouble him; but that such rather will afford their countenance and furtherance to his undertakings.

But assuredly he shall have the favourable protection of Almighty God, who thoroughly knowing his heart, and observing the righteousness of his intentions and proceedings, will not suffer him to incur any notable, destructive, remediless calamity. His prayer, dictated by good conscience, *Let integrity and uprightness preserve me*, will certainly be heard; God having passed his word for it in numberless places of Scripture; particularly in those remarkable words of *Isay*: * *He that walketh*
righte-

Psal. 25. 21.

(Prov. 13. 6.

& 11. 6.)

Prov. 2. 7. &

18. 10. & 28.

18. & 29. 25.

Psal. 18. 2,

30. 35. & 23.

4. & 24. 4, 5.

Job 11. 14, 15.

* Isa. 33. 15,

16.

righteously and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high, his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks, his bread shall be given him, his water shall be sure. That is, A man who is constantly upright in his dealings, shall by the Divine Providence be infallibly and impreguably preserved from any grievous mischief, from any sore want, from any extreme distress.

The way of Uprightness is ever guarded with Angels, ready to promote the affairs of the honest person, or at least to protect him from evil. He may hopefully say to himself, as *Abraham* did to his Servant, *The Lord, before whom I* Gen. 24. 49. *walk, will send his Angel with thee, and prosper thy way:* or he confidently may apply to himself that of the Psalmist, *He shall give his Angels charge over thee,* Psal. 91. 11, *to keep thee in all thy ways: They shall* 12. *bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

However, the sequel will be tolerable: what-ever the success of his undertaking be, it can be no ruine, no

N

flurr,

flurr, no heart-breaking to him. His Conscience is safe, his credit is entire, his hopes are good ; he is perfectly secure from being tainted with foul guilt, from being exposed to due reproach, from being stung with vexatious remorse, from being plunged into a gulf of desperation or disconsolateness. For,

VI. The way of Uprightness is fair and pleasant. He that walketh in it hath good weather, and a clear skie about him ; a hopefull confidence, and a chearfull satisfaction do ever wait up-

Prov. 21. 15. on him. *It is joy (as the Wise man saith) to the just to doe judgment.*

(Prov. 23.
17, 18.)

Being conscious to himself of an honest meaning, and a due course of prosecuting it, he feeleth no check or struggling of mind, no regret or sting of heart; being thoroughly satisfied and pleased with what he is about, his judgment approving, and his will acquiescing in his procedure, as worthy of himself, agreeable to reason, and conformable to his duty.

He therefore briskly moveth forward with alacrity and courage ; there being within him nothing to controll or countermand him, to pull him back, to make

make him halt, to distract or disturb him.

Nor hardly can any thing abroad dismay or discourage him. For he may reasonably hope for the good will of men, and cannot hugely dread their opposition. He may strongly presume upon the propitious aspect and favourable succour of Heaven, which always smileth and casteth benign influences on honest undertakings. Prov. 11.20.

He that hath chosen a good way, may with assurance commend his way to God's providence; he may depend upon God for his concurrent benediction; Jer. 32. 19.
Prov. 24.14.

he with an humble boldness may address prayers to God for his protection and aid. He so doing hath interest in divers clear declarations and express promises of good success; Heb. 4. 16,

such as those; *Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass. The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him in truth:*

Psal. 37. 5. & 55. 22.
Prov 16.3 Eccles 2. 10.
Psal. 34. 22. & 26. 1. &
33. 21. Prov. 10. 24.
Psal. 145. 18, 19. & 34.
15. & 26. 11. Job 22. 27.

He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him; he will hear their cry, and will save them.

He may dare to refer his case to the severest examination, saying with *Job,*

Job 31. 6. *Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity; and*
 Psal. 7. 8. & *with the Psalmist, Judge me, O Lord,*
 26. 1. *according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity, that is in me.*

He with an humble confidence can appeal to God, borrowing the words
 2 King. 20. 3. *of Hezekiah, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.*

Prov. 10. 28. Hence, *The Hope of the righteous* (as the *Wise man* telleth us) *is gladness.* He considering the goodness, the justice, the fidelity of God, whereof his integrity doth render him capable and a proper object, cannot but conceive a comfortable hope of a good issue.

And obtaining success, he doth not onely enjoy the material pleasure thereof, but the formal satisfaction that it is indeed good success, or a blessing indulged to him by special favour of God; enabling him to say with the Psalmist,
 Psal. 18. 20, 21. *The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God.*

How-

However, an upright dealer hath this comfortable reserve, that what-ever doth befall him, however the business goeth, he shall not condemn, and punish himself with remorse; he shall not want a consolation able to support and to erect his mind. He shall triumph, if not in the felicity of his success, yet in the integrity of his heart, and the innocence of his deportment; even as Blessed Job did under all the pressures of his adversity: for, *Till I die, (said he) I will not remove my integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.* (Prov. 24. 16.) Job 27. 5, 6.

So true it is upon all accounts, that, according to that assertion in the Psalm, *Light is sown for the righteous, and joy- full gladness for the upright in heart.* Psal. 97. 11.

VII. He that walketh uprightly is secure as to his honour and credit. He is sure not to come off disgracefully, either at home in his own apprehensions, or abroad in the estimations of men. He doth not blush at what he is doing, nor doth reproach himself for what he hath done. No blemish or blame can stick upon his proceeding.

The Fifth Sermon.

By pure Integrity a man first maintaineth a due respect and esteem for himself, then preserveth an entire reputation with others : he reflecteth on his own heart with complacence, and looketh upon the world with confidence. He hath no fear of being detected, or care to smother his intents. He is content that his thoughts should be sounded, and his actions sifted to the bottom. He could even wish, that his breast had windows, that his heart were transparent, that all the world might see through him, and descry the clearness of his intentions. The more curiously his ways are marked, the more exactly his dealings are scann'd, the more thoroughly his designs are penetrated and known; the greater approbation he is sure to receive.

The issue of things assuredly will be creditable to him; and when the daylight hath scattered all mists, hath cleared all misprisions and mistakes, his reputation will shine most brightly : the event declaring, that he had no corrupt ends ; the course of his proceedings being justified by the very light of things.

God himself will be concerned to vindicate his reputation, not suffering him

him to be considerably defamed; according to that promise, *He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day.* That in Job will be made good to him, *Then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot:* and he may confidently averre with the Psalmist, *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments.* Psal. 37. 6, 19. & 34. 5. I Pet. 2. 6. Job 11. 15. Psal. 119. 6, 39. 46.

If he findeth good success, it will not be invidious, appearing well deserved, and fairly procured: it will be truly honourable as a fruit and recompence of Vertue, as a mark and pledge of the Divine favour toward him. Psal. 91. 15.

If he seemeth disappointed, yet he will not be disparaged: wise and candid men will excuse him; good men will patronize his cause; no man of sense and ingenuity will insult on his misfortune. *He shall not (as the Psalmist assureth) be ashamed in an evil time.* Psal. 37. 19. Yea, often his repute from under a cloud will shine, if not with so glaring splendour, yet with a pleasant lustre; Uprightness disposing him to bear adverse events with a gracefull decency.

VIII. The particular methods of acting which Uprightness disposeth to ob-

serve, do yield great security from troubles and crosses in their transactions.

What is the conduct of the upright man? He is clear, frank, candid, harmless, consistent in all his behaviour, his discourse, his dealing. His heart commonly may be seen in his face, his mind doth ever suite with his speech, his deeds have a just correspondence with his professions: he never faileth to perform what he doth promise, and to satisfy the expectations which he hath raised.

Prov. 13. 5.
Psal. 36. 3, 4.
& 34. 13. &
15. 2.

He doth not wrap himself in clouds, that none may see where he is, or know how to find him; may discern what he is about,* or whither he tendeth.

Prov. 10. 18. He disguiseth not his intents with falacious pretences of conscience, of publick good, of special friendship, and respect.

He doth use no disingenuous, spitefull, unjust tricks or sleights to serve the present turn.

Jer. 5. 26,
(Psal. 64. 5.
& 56. 6. & 57. 6. &
9. 15. & 10. 2.
35. 7. & 140. 5.
Prov. 26. 27.
Eccles 10. 8.) He laieth no baits or snares to catch men, alluring them into mischief or inconvenience.

As he doth not affect any poor base ends, so he will not defile his fair intentions by sordid means of compassing them; such as are illusive simulations, and

and subdulous artifices, treacherous col-
lusions, flie insinuations, and sycophan-
tick detractions, versatile whifflings and
dodgings, flattering colloquings and
glozings, servile crouchings and faw-
nings, and the like.

Psal. 10. 7.
& 55. 21. &
64. 6. & 10.
9, 10. & 56.
5.
Rom. 16. 18.
Eccclus 19.
26.
2 Sam. 15. 5.
Prov. 11. 9.
& 26. 25.

He hath little of the Serpent, (none
of its lurking insidioufness, of its surpris-
ing violence, of its rancorous venom,
of its keen mordacity,) but much of the
Dove, (all its simplicity, its gentleness,
its fidelity, its innocence,) in his con-
versation and commerce.

His wisdom is ever tempered with
sincerity, and seasoned with humanity,
with meekness, with charity; being *the*
wisdom which is from above, first pure,
then peaceable, gentle, easie to be entrea-
ted, full of good fruits, without partiali-
ty, and without hypocrisie.

Jam. 3. 17.

He sometime may prudently reserve
his mind, not venting it by foolish lo-
quacity: but his words do never clash
with his meaning, so as to deeeive or
disappoint any man.

Prov. 14. 33.
& 29. 11. &
13. 16. & 13.
3. & 21. 23.
& 12. 23.
Eccclus 20 7.

He may warily prevent harm and de-
cline perils: but it is without hurtfull
countermining, or deriving mischief on
his neighbour.

Prov. 22. 3.
& 27. 12. &
14. 8. & 14.
15, 16.

He may discreetly pick out seasons,
and

Eccles 8. 5.

and embrace opportunities of righting or benefiting himself: but he never will seek or lay hold of advantages to prejudice others.

Prov. 12. 16.

19. 11.

He sometimes may repress insurrections of anger or disgust: but, he never doth allow them to bake into rancour or malice.

He may be apt to use courteous, affable, obliging demeanour, serving to breed friendships, and to stifle enmities: but he never thereby meaneth to gull, inveigle and entrap men; or to procure instruments and aids of any perverse design.

He is no enemy to himself, but (according to the obligations of reason and conscience) he hath always a regard to the good of others; nor is ever so selfish, as to be unjust or uncharitable to any man.

The principal engines he doth employ for atchieving his enterprises are, a carefull and cautious providence in contriving, a sedulous and steddy diligence in acting, a circumspect heedfulness not to provoke any man by offensive carriage, by injury, by discourtesie, to obstruct him, but rather by kind demonstrations and real beneficence to engage

gage men to further him in his proceedings: but especially his main instrument, wherein he most confideth, is devout supplication to God for his succour and blessing.

Now is not this conduct the most secure that can be? doth it not afford many great commodities and advantages? doth it not exempt from manifold fears, and cares, and crosses, and slaveries?

It cannot but derive blessings from the God of truth, the great friend of simplicity and sincerity, the hater of

PROV. 12. 22.
(PRO. 12. 19.)

falshood and guile. And humanely regarding things, he that useth these methods, doth from them obtain many conveniencies. He doth not lie under perpetual constraint, engaged to keep a constant guard upon himself, to watch his memory, to curb his tongue, to manage his very looks and gestures, lest they betray his intentions, and disclose his plots. He is not at the trouble of stopping holes, of mending flaws, of patching up repugnancies in his actions, that his mind do not break through them. He is not afraid of the disappointment and shame which attend the detection of unworthy designs. He is not at pains to obvi-
ate

Prov. 26. 25--

10. 18.

21. 6.

Psal. 26. 4.

ate the jealousies, the surmises, the diffidences, the counterplots, the preventive oppositions and assaults, which gloomy closeness and crafty dissimulation ever do raise against the practisers of them. In fine, men do not shun the conversation and the commerce of an upright person, but gladly do consort and deal with him; do seek his acquaintance and alliance: they are not apt to distrust him, to suspect him, to be shy and reserved in their intercourse with him; but readily do place an entire confidence in him, and use a clear frankness toward him. No man doth fear him as dangerous, or will cross him as an adversary. Whence as he seldom hath cause to fear, or occasion to contest with others; so he doth undisturbedly enjoy the benefits of Society with great safety, ease, and comfort.

IX. Lastly, An upright walker hath perfect security, as to the final result of affairs, that he shall not be quite baffled in his expectations and desires. And if prosperity doth consist in a satisfaction of mind concerning events, he cannot fail of most prosperous success. *Whatsoever*
he doeth (saith the Psalmist of him) *it shall*

Psal. 1. 3.

Prov. 12. 21.

shall prosper. How is that? Doth he, if he warreth, always get the victory? is he perpetually, when he tradeth, a considerable gainer? will he certainly after sowing reap a plentiful crop? Probably yes; and perhaps no: Yet assuredly he shall prosper, in the true notion of prosperity, explained by those Divine Sayings; *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.* Psal. 37. 37. *The work of righteousness shall be peace,* Isa. 32. 17: *and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. Surely I know it* Eccles 8. 12. *shall be well with them that fear God.*

He cannot be much defeated in his purposes: for, as to his general, principal, absolute designs, (that is, his design of pleasing God, and procuring his favour; his design of satisfying himself, and discharging his Conscience; his design of promoting his own spiritual interest, and saving his Soul; his design of doing good, of exercising charity to his neighbour, of serving the publick, of obliging the world by vertuous example, and by real beneficence,) these he cannot fail thoroughly to accomplish; nothing can obstruct him in the prosecution, nothing can debarre him from the execution of those undertakings;

kings ; in spite of all the world, by the succour of that Divine grace which ever doth favour and further such designs, he most happily will atchieve them. And for other inferiour designs, he can hardly be crossed in regard to them : for it is an essential part of integrity, not otherwise to affect or aim at private secular interests, then under condition, and with a reservation, if it be God's pleasure, if it seem good to Divine Wisdom. He knoweth that his pains employed on any honest purpose, in a fair way, (be it to procure some worldly advantage for himself, for his relations, for his friend,) are not lost, if they have the fruit of submission to God's will, and acquiescence in the event disposed by him. He is assured that it is good luck to have his project blasted, and that missing is better then getting, when by Sovereign Wisdom it is so determined. He therefore could not so fix his heart, or engage his affection in any such concern, that his mind is surprized, or his passions discomposed by a seeming adversness of events to his endeavours. So that in effect he can have no bad success. For how can that occurrence be deemed bad, which plain
reason

reason dictateth in certain judgment to be most expedient for him; about which he ever was very indifferent, and with which at present he is not heartily displeased? How can it be taken for disappointment and misfortune, which one was prepared to embrace with satisfaction and complacence?

Yea, to a person so disposed, that success which seemeth most adverse, justly may be reputed the best and most happy, as promoting ends incomparably more excellent then any worldly gain; as producing fruits exceedingly more wholesome and more savoury then any temporal commodity; as exercising and improving the divinest Vertues, (Humility, Patience, Meekness, Moderation, Contentedness) a grain whereof is worth all the wealth, all the preferment, all that is desirable in the world.

Wherefore let the worst that can arrive, (or that which humane blindness and fondness do count the worst,) yet upright persons do not come off ill, or so (matters being rightly stated) as to be losers upon the foot of the accompt.

If this do not satisfie grosser apprehensions, we may adde, that even in these meaner concerns Almighty God is pleased

pleased commonly to reward and encourage upright persons by the best success. For He hath as it were a natural inclination to gratifie those who desire to please him; and (as the Psalmist expresseth it) *hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants*. He may seem concerned in honour to countenance those who have regard to his will, and who repose confidence in his aid; discriminating them from such as presume to act against or without him, in defiance to his will, with no deference to his Providence. As they do render him his due respect, by submitting to his authority, and avowing his power; so he will acknowledge them by signally favouring their concerns. Even his truth and fidelity are engaged in their behalf; seeing he very often hath declared and promised, that in all matters, and upon all occasions, he will be ready to bless them.

Deut. 28. 2, 3.
 Gen. & 30. 9.
 Ps. 128. 1. 2.
 & 91. 1 —
 & 34. 9, 10. &
 84. 11.
 Matt. 6. 33.
 Eccles 8. 5.
 Prov. 28. 10,
 20. & 10. 6.

X. To conclude; It is an infinite advantage of upright dealing, that at the last issue, when all things shall be most accurately tried and impartially decided, a man is assured to be fully justified in it, and plentifully rewarded for it. As then

(Pro. 11. 18.)

then all the deceits, which now pass under specious masks, shall be laid bare; all varnish of pretence shall be wiped off; all perverse intrigues shall be unravelled; all wicked and base intentions shall be quite stripp'd of the veils which now enfold them; all shrewd contrivers and engineers of mischief, all practisers of unjust and malicious guile, shall be exposed to shame, *shall lie down in sorrow*: So then *The righteous man shall stand in great boldness*; his case will be rightly stated, and fully cleared from slanderous aspersions, from odious surmises, from unlucky prejudices and mistakes: what he hath done, shall be approved; what he hath suffered, shall be repaired. So that it then evidently will appear, that upright simplicity is the deepest wisdom, and perverse craft the meerest shallowness: that he who is true and just to others, is most faithfull and friendly to himself: that who-ever doth abuse his neighbour, is his own greatest cheater and foe. For, *In the day when God shall* Rom. 2. 16.
judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ,
every man's work shall be made manifest. 1 Cor. 3. 13.
The Lord will bring to light the hidden 1 Cor. 4 5.
things of darkness, and will make mani-

O
fest

*fest the counsels of the hearts ; and then
shall every man have praise of God. Unto
1 Tim. i. 17. which our upright Judge, the King e-
ternal, immortal, invisible, the onely wise
God, be honour and glory for ever and
ever. Amen.*

The



The Sixth Sermon.

I THES. 5. 17.

Pray without ceasing.

IT is the manner of *S. Paul* in his Epistles, after that he hath discussed some main Points of doctrine or discipline, (which occasion required that he should clear and settle,) to propose several good advices and rules, in the observance whereof the life of Christian practice doth consist. So that he thereby hath furnished us with so rich a variety of moral and spiritual precepts, concerning special matters, subordinate to the general laws of Piety and Virtue; that out of them might well be compiled a Body of Ethicks, or System of Precepts *de officiis*, in truth and in compleatness far excelling those which any Philosophy hath been able to devise, or deliver. These he rangeth not in any formal method, nor linketh together

The Sixth Sermon.

gether with strict connexion, but freely scattereth them so as from his mind (as out of a fertil soil, impregnated with all seeds of wisdom and goodness) they did haply spring up, or as they were suggested by that Holy Spirit which continually guided and governed him.

Among divers such delivered here, this is one, which shall be the Subject of my present Discourse; the which, having no other plain coherence (except by affinity of matter) with the rest enclosing it, I shall consider absolutely by it self, endeavouring somewhat to explain it, and to urge its practice.

Pray without ceasing. For understanding these words, let us first consider what is meant by the act enjoined, *Praying*; then, what the qualification or circumstance adjoined, *without ceasing*, doth import.

I. The word *Prayer* doth in its usual latitude of acception comprehend all sorts of Devotion, or all that part of Religious practice wherein we do immediately address our selves to God, having by speech (oral or mental) a kind of intercourse and conversation with him. So it includeth that Praise which we should yield to God, implying our
due

due esteem of his most excellent Perfections, most glorious Works, most just and wise dispensations of Providence and Grace; that Thanksgiving whereby we should express an affectionate resentment of our obligation to him for the numberless great benefits we receive from him; that Acknowledgment of our entire dependence upon him, or our totall subjection to his power and pleasure; together with that Profession of Faith in him, and avowing of service to him, which we do owe as his natural creatures, and subjects; that humble Confession of our infirmity, our vileness, our guilt, our misery, (joyned with deprecation of wrath and vengeance,) which is due from us as wretched men, and grievous sinners; that Petition of things needfull or convenient for us, (of supply in our wants, of succour and comfort in our distresses, of direction and assistance in our undertakings, of mercy and pardon for our offences,) which our natural state (our poor, weak, sad and sinfull state) doth engage us to seek; that Intercession for others, which general charity, or special relation do require from us, as concerned or obliged to desire and promote their good.

All these Religious performances Prayer in its larger notion doth comprise : according whereto in common use the whole Body of Divine Service, containing all such acts, is termed *Prayer*; and Temples, consecrated to the performance of all holy duties, are styled *Houses of prayer*; and that brief Directory, or pregnant Form of all Devotion, which our Lord dictated, is called *his Prayer*: and in numberless places of Scripture it is so taken.

In a stricter sense, it doth onely signify one particular act among those, the Petition of things needfull or usefull for us.

But according to the former more comprehensive meaning I chuse to understand it here; both because it is most commonly so used, (then, especially, when no distinctive limitation is annexed, or the nature of the subject matter doth not restrain it,) and because general reasons do equally oblige to performance of all these duties in the manner here prescribed: nor is there any ground to exclude any part of Devotion from continual use; we being obliged no less incessantly to praise God for his excellencies, and thank him for his
benefits,

benefits, to avow his Sovereign Majesty and Authority, to confess our infirmities and miscarriages, then to beg help and mercy from God. All Devotion therefore, all sorts of proper and due address to God (that *πᾶσα προσέ-
δχῃ*, all prayer and supplication, which *Eph. 6. 18.*
S. Paul otherwhere speaketh of) are here enjoined, according to the manner adjoyned, *without ceasing*, *ἀδιαλείπτως*, that is, indefinitely, or continually.

2. For the meaning of which expression, we must suppose, that it must not be understood as if we were obliged in every instant or singular point of time actually to apply our minds to this practice: for to doe thus is in it self impossible, and therefore can be no matter of duty; it is inconsistent with other duties, and therefore must not be practised; yea, will not consist with it self; for, that we may pray, we must live, that we may live, we must eat, that we may eat, we must work, and must therefore attend other matters; so that actual Devotion neither must, nor can swallow up all our time and care. The deliberate operations of our mind are sometimes interrupted by sleep, sometimes will be taken up in satisfying our

natural appetites, sometimes must be spent in attendance upon other reasonable employments, commanded or allowed by God ; whence there can be no obligation to this practice according to that unlimited interpretation. This Precept therefore (as divers others of a like general purport and expression) must be understood, not in a natural, but moral sense, according as the exigence of things permitteth, or as the reason of the case requireth ; so far as it is conveniently practicable, or as it is reasonably compatible with other duties, and needs. But we must not so restrain it as to wrong it, by pinching it within too narrow bounds. How then it may be understood, and how far it should extend, we shall endeavour to declare by propounding divers senses whereof it is capable, grounded upon plain testimonies of Scripture, and enforceable by good Reason ; according to which senses we shall together press the observance thereof.

Adoro Scripturæ plenitudinem. Tertull.

I. First then, *Praying incessantly* may import the maintaining in our Souls a ready disposition or habitual inclination to Devotion ; that which in Scripture

is

is termed *the spirit of supplication*. This Zech. 12. 10.
 in moral esteem, and according to current language, derived thence, amounteth to a continual practice; a man being reckoned and said to doe that, to which he is ever prompt and propense: as it is said of the righteous man, that *he is ever mercifull, and lendeth*, because Psal. 37. 26.
 he is constantly disposed to supply his neighbour with needfull relief; although he doth not ever actually dispense alms, or furnish his neighbour with supplies for his necessity. The words may signifie this; they do at least by consequence imply so much: for if we do not in this, we can hardly perform the duty in any sense; without a good temper fitting, and a good appetite prompting to Devotion, we scarce can, or will ever apply our selves thereto. If there be not in our heart a root of Devotion, whence should it spring? how can it live, or thrive? If the organs of Prayer are out of kelter, or out of tune, how can we pray? If we be not *accincti*, have not *the loins of our mind girt*, and *our feet shod in preparation* to the service, when shall we set forward thereto? My heart (said David) is fixed, I will sing and give praise: fixed,

*Ut quamvis
 tacet Hermo-
 genes, cantor
 tamen æquè
 est, &c. Hor.*

I Pet. 1. 13.
 Luk. 12. 35.
 Eph. 6. 14.

Psal. 108. 1.



(2 Chr. 30. fixed, that is, readily *prepared*, and
 19. Ezr. 7. steddily inclined to Devotion. So
 10.) should ours constantly be. As a true friend is ever ready to entertain his friend with a frank courtesie and complacency ; as he ever is apt upon occasion for advice and assistance to have recourse to him : so should we be always disposed chearfully and decently to converse with God, when he freely cometh to us, or we have need to apply our selves to him. If there be (from stupidity of mind, from coldness of affection, from sluggishness of spirit, from worldly distraction) any indisposition or averseness thereto, we should by serious consideration and industrious care labour to remove them ; rousing our spirits, and kindling in our affections some fervency of desire toward spiritual things : otherwise we shall be apt to shun, or to slip the opportunities inviting to Devotion ; our hearts will be so resty, or listless, that hardly we shall be induced to perform it, when it is most necessary or usefull for us.

II. *Praying incessantly* may denote a vigilant attendance (with earnest regard,
 and

and firm purpose) employed upon Devotion: such attendance as men usually bestow on their affairs, whereof although the actuall prosecution sometime doth stick, yet the design continually proceedeth; the mind ever so directing its eye toward them, as quickly to espy, and readily to snatch any advantages of promoting them. This is a kind of continuance in practice, and is commonly so termed: as we say that such an one is building a house, is writing a book, is occupying such land, although he be at present sleeping, or eating, or following any other business; because his main design never sleepeth, and his purpose continues uninterrupted. This is that which is so often enjoined under the phrase of *watching* about Prayer. *Watch* Luk. 21. 36. *ye therefore, and pray always*, saith our Lord. *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same*, saith S. Paul. *Be ye sober, and watch unto prayer*, saith S. Peter. Which expressions import a most constant and carefull attendance upon this duty: that we do not make it a *παισίστιον*, or by-business in our life, (a matter of small consideration or indifference, of curiosity, of chance,) to be transacted drowsily or faintly, with a desultorious and flight

Col 4. 2.

Eph. 6. 18.

1 Pet. 4. 7.

Matt. 24. 42.

25. 13.

slight endeavour, by fits, as the humour taketh us ; but that, accounting it a business of the choicest nature and weightiest moment, we do adhere thereto with unmovable purpose, regard it with undistracted attention, pursue it with unwearied diligence, being always upon the guard, wakefull and expedite, intent upon, and apt to close with any occasion suggesting matter thereof. That we should doe thus reason also doth oblige : for that, as in truth no business doth better deserve our utmost resolution and care, so none doth more need them ; nature being so backward, and occasion so slippery, that if we do not ever mind it, we shall seldom practise it.

2 Pet. 1. 12.

ἀλλ' ὡςμιμν.

Gal. 4. 18.

πᾶντοτε ὥ-

ς ἐσθί.

III. *Praying incessantly* may signifie, that we do actually embrace all fit seasons and emergent occasions of Devotion. This in moral computation doth pass for continual performance : as a tree is said to bear that fruit, which it produceth in the season ; and a man is accounted to work in that trade, which he exerciseth whenever he is called thereto. This sense is in several Precepts parallel to that in hand plainly expressed. *Pray* (saith S. Paul) *with*
all

Eph. 6. 18.

all prayer and supplication ἐν παντί καὶ ὅτε
 and, *Watch* (saith our Lord) ἐν παντί Luk. 21. 36.
 καὶ ὅτε δεόμενοι, *praying in every season,*
 or upon every opportunity. Devotion
 indeed is rarely unseasonable, or imper-
 tinent; we may offer it ἀναίρεως, ἀνα-
 ἔως, *in season, and out of season*; that is, 2 Tim. 4. 2.
 not onely taking opportunities presen-
 ted for it, or urgently requiring it, but
 catching at them, and creating them to
 our selves, when there is no such appa-
 rent and pressing need of it. But there
 are some special occasions, which more
 importunately and indispensably do exact
 it: some seasons there are (either mini-
 stred by extrinsecal accidents, or spring-
 ing from internal dispositions) when,
 without both great blame, and much
 dammage to our selves, we cannot neg-
 lect it: times there be most proper, and
 acceptable, when we do especially need
 to pray, and when we are likely to
 speed well therein. *Every one* (saith Psal. 32. 6.
 the Psalmist) *that is godly will pray un-*
to thee in a time when thou mayest be
found: and, *My prayer* (saith he again) Psal. 69. 13.
is unto thee in an acceptable time. 2 Cor. 6. 2.
 Isa. 49. 8.

Thus, when we have received any
 singular blessing or notable favour from
 God, when prosperous success hath at-
 tended

tended our honest enterprizes, when we have been happily rescued from imminent dangers, when we have been supported in difficulties, or relieved in wants and streights; then is it seasonable to render sacrifices of Thanksgiving and praise to the God of victory, help, and mercy; to admire and celebrate him, *who is our strength, and our deliverer, our faithfull refuge in trouble, our fortress, and the rock of our salvation.* To omit this piece of Devotion then, is vile ingratitude, or stupid negligence and sloth.

*Psal. 18.1,2.
& 71.3. &c.*

When any rare object or remarkable occurrence doth upon this theater of the world present it self to our view, in surveying the glorious works of Nature, or the strange events of Providence; then is a proper occasion suggested to send up hymns of Praise to the power, the wisdom, the goodness of the World's great Creatour and Governour.

*Δὲ πῶς
πρὸς τὸν
πρὸς τὸν
πρὸς τὸν
Marc. Erem.*

When we undertake any business of special moment and difficulty; then it is expedient (wisdom prompting it) to sue for God's aid, to commit our affairs into his hand, to recommend our endeavours to the blessing of him, by whose guidance all things are ordered, without

without whose concurrence nothing can be effected, upon whose arbitrary disposal all success dependeth.

The beginning of any design or business (although ordinary, if considerable) is a proper season of Prayer unto him, to whose bounty and favour we owe our ability to act, support in our proceedings, any comfortable issue of what we do: (for *All our sufficiency is of him: Without him we can do nothing.*) 2 Cor. 3. 5. Joh. 15. 5.

Whence we can never apply our selves to any business or work, not go to eat, to sleep, to travel, to trade, to study, with any true content, any reasonable security, any satisfactory hope, if we do not first humbly implore the favourable protection, guidance, and assistance of God.

When we do fall into doubts, or darkneses, (in the course either of our spiritual or secular affairs,) not knowing what course to steer, or which way to turn our selves; (a case which to so blind and silly creatures, as we are, must often happen;) then doth the time bid us to consult the great Oracle of truth, *the mighty Counsellour, the Father of lights*, seeking resolution and satisfaction, light and wisdom from him; Jer. 10. 23. Prov. 20. 24. 16. 9. Isa. 9. 6. Jam. 1. 17.
saying

Pfal. 25. 4, 5. saying with the Psalmist, *Shew me thy ways, O Lord, lead me in thy truth, and teach me ; for thou art the God of my salvation : Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me ;*

Jam. 1. 5.

Prov. 2. 6.

Isa. 30. 1.

following the advice of S. James, If any man lack wisdom , let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.

Pfal. 56. 3.

& 34. 4.

& 18. 3.

When any storm of danger blustereth about us, perillously threatning, or furiously assailing us with mischief, (so that hardly by our own strength or wit we can hope to evade ;) then with the wings of ardent Devotion we should fly unto God for shelter, and for relief.

Phil. 4. 6.

When any anxious care distracteth, or any heavy burthen presseth our minds, we should by Prayer ease our selves of them, and discharge them upon God, committing the matter of them to his care and providence ; according to that direction of S. Paul, *Be carefull for nothing : but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.*

When we do lie under any irksome trouble, or sore distress, (of want, pain, disgrace ;) then, for succour and support, for ease and comfort, we should have recourse

recourse to the Father of pities; and ^{2 Cor. 1. 3.}
 God of all consolation; who is nigh to all ^{Psal. 145. 18,}
 that call upon him, will also hear their ^{19. & 147. 3.}
 cry; and will save them; who, when
 the righteous cry, doth hear them, and ^{Psal. 34. 17.}
 delivereth them out of all their troubles;
 who is so often styled the hiding-place ^{Psal. 18. 1, 2.}
 from troubles, the help and strength, the ^{& 56. 3. &}
 shield and buckler, the rock, the fortress, ^{84. 9. & 32.}
 the high tower, the horn of salvation, to ^{7. & 33. 20.}
 all good and distressed people. To him
 we should in such a condition have re-
 course, imitating the pious Psalmist,
 whose practice was this; *In the day of* ^{Psal. 77. 2.}
my trouble I sought the Lord: I poured ^{& 18. 6. &}
out my complaint before him, I shewed be- ^{142. 2.}
fore him my trouble: I called unto the ^{Psal. 118. 5.}
Lord in my distress; the Lord answered
me, and set me in a large place.

When any strong temptation doth in-
 vade us, with which by our own strength
 we cannot grapple, but are like to sink
 and falter under it; then is it oppor-
 tune and needfull that we should seek
 to God for a supply of spiritual forces,
 and the succour of his Almighty grace,
 as S. Paul did: when there was given to ^{2 Cor. 12. 7,}
 him a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of ^{8, 9.}
 Satan to buffet him; then he besought
 the Lord thrice that it might depart from
 P him:

The Sixth Sermon.

him : and he had this return from God, My grace is sufficient for thee.

When also (from ignorance, or mistake, from inadvertency, negligence, or rashness, from weakness, from wantonness, from presumption) we have transgressed our duty, and incurred sinfull guilt ; then, (for avoiding the consequent danger and vengeance, for unloading our Consciences of the burthen and discomfort thereof,) with humble confession in our mouths, and serious contrition in our hearts, we should apply our selves to the God of mercy, deprecating his wrath, and imploring pardon from him ; remembring that promise

- 1 Joh. 1. 9. *of S. John, If we confess our sins, he is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity ; and*
 Prov. 28. 13. *that declaration of the Wise man, He that covereth his sins shall not prosper : but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*
 Psal. 32. 5. *& 51. 1. &c.*
 Job 7. 20.

In these and the like cases God by our necessities doth invite and summon us to come unto him ; and no less foolish then impious we are, if we do then flink away, or fly from him. Then we should (as the Apostle to the Hebrews exhorteth) *come boldly unto the throne of*

of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need, (or, * for seasonable relief.)

* πρὸς εὐ-
καιρὴν βοή-
θειαν.

And beside those outwardly prompting and urging us, there be other opportunities, springing from within us, which we are no less obliged and concerned to embrace. When God by his gentle whispers calleth us, or by his soft impulses draweth us into his presence; we should then take heed of stopping our ears, or turning our hearts from him, refusing to hearken, or to comply. We must not any-wise quench or damp any sparks of devout affection kindled in us by the Divine Spirit; we must not repell or resist any of his kindly suggestions or motions.

Jer. 35. 15.
Prov. 1. 24.
Isa. 50. 2.
Eccl. 65. 12. &
66. 4.

When-ever we find our selves well affected to, or well framed for Devotion; that we have a lively sense of, and a coming appetite to spiritual things; that our spirits are brisk and pure, our fancy calm and clear, our hearts tender and supple, our affections warm and nimble; then a fair season offereth it self: and when the iron is so hot, we should strike.

If at any time we feel any forward inclinations or good dispositions to the

practice of this duty, we should never check or curb them, but rather should promote and advance them; pushing our selves forward in this hopefull career; letting out the stream of our affections into this right channel, that it may run freely therein, that it may overflow and diffuse it self in exuberance of Devotion. Farther,

IV. *Praying incessantly* may signifie, that we should with assiduous urgency drive on the intent of our Prayers, never quitting it, or desisting, till our requests are granted, or our desires are accomplished. Thus doing, we may be said to pray continually: as he that goeth forward in his journey, (although he sometime doth bait, sometime doth rest and repose himself,) is said yet to be in travel; or as he that doth not wave the prosecution of his cause, (although some demurrs intervene) is deemed still to be in suit. This is that which our Lord did in the Gospel prescribe, and persuade, where 'tis recorded of him, that *He spake a parable unto them, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.* That praying always the ensuing discourse sheweth to import restless

Luk. 18. 1.

restless importunity, and perseverance in prayer : the same which so often is commended to us by the phrases of *μὴ ὀκναεῖν*, not to faint or falter ; *μὴ παύ- Luk. 18. 1.*
εσθαι, not to cease, or give over ; *προσ- Col. 1. 9.*
κατελεγεῖν, to continue instant, or hold Eph. 1. 16.
 out stoutly ; *ἀγωνίζεσθαι*, to strive ear- Rom. 12. 12.
 nestly, or contest and struggle in prayers, Col. 4. 2, 12.
προσμένειν ταῖς δεήσεσι, to abide at suppli- 1 Tim. 5. 5.
 cations ; *ἀγρυπνεῖν ἐν πάντῃ προσκαλεσθήσει*,
 to watch with all perseverance. That Eph. 6. 18.
 which also is implied by those terms,
 which in Scriptural style do commonly
 expresse Devotion: by * *see-*

king God ; which implieth,
 that God doth not present-
 ly, upon any slight address,
 discover himself in benefici-
 al effects answerable to our
 desires, but after a carefull
 and painfull continuance in
 our applications to him : by
 * *waiting upon God* ; which
 signifieth, that if God do not
 presently appear granting
 our requests, we should pa-
 tiently stay, expecting till he be pleased
 to doe it in his own best time, accor-
 ding to that in the Psalm, *Our eyes wait* Psal. 123. 2.
upon the Lord our God, untill he have

* Psal. 10. 4. & 9. 10. & 14.
 2. & 24. 6. & 63. 1. & 69.
 6, 32. & 70. 4. & 83. 16.
 Job 8. 5. Deut. 4. 29.
 Prov. 8. 17. Psal. 77. 6.

* Psal. 123. 2. & 69. 3. &
 130. 5. & 37. 7. & 25. 5.
 & 27. 14. & 37. 34. & 25.
 21. & 52. 9. & 59. 9. & 145.
 15. Isa. 8. 17. & 40. 31. &
 49. 23. Hos. 12. 6. Lam.
 3. 25, 26. Prov. 20. 22.

Luk 12. 36.
Matt. 7. 7.

mercy upon us : by knocking ; which intimateth, that the door of grace doth not ever stand open, or that we can have an effectual access to God, untill he, warned and (as it were) excited by our earnest importunity, pleaseth to listen, to disclose himself, to come forth unto us.

*Vid Chryl.
Tom. 6. Orat.
8. ad The-
od. 2.*

*Αἱ δὲ ἐκ αὐ-
τοῦ καὶ ἐκ
μὲν αὐτοῦ
ἐκ τῆς*

And this practice Reason also doth enforce. For there are some good things absolutely necessary for our spiritual life and welfare, (such as are freedom from bad inclinations, disorderly affections, vicious habits, and noxious errors ; the sanctifying presence and influence of God's Holy Spirit, with the blessed Graces and sweet fruits thereof ; growth in Vertue, delight in spiritual things, the sense of God's love and favour, with the like,) which good reason engageth us so perseveringly to seek, as never to rest, or be satisfied, till we have acquired them in perfect degree ; since we cannot ever doe well without them, or ever get enough of them. In begging other inferiour things, it may become us to be reserved, indifferent, and modest ; but about these matters (wherein all our felicity is extreamly concerned) it were a folly to be slack
or

or timorous: as we cannot be said immoderately to desire them, so we cannot be supposed immodestly to seek them there, where onely they can be found, in God's presence and hand. The case doth bear, yea doth require, that we should be eager and hot, resolute and stiff, free and bold, yea, in a manner peremptory and impudent solicitours with God for them. So our Saviour intimateth, where, comparing the manner of God's proceeding with that of men, he representeth one friend yielding needfull succour to another, not barely upon the score of friendship, but διὰ τὴν ἀναιδέειαν, *for his impudence*; that Luk. 11. 8. is, for his confident and continued urgency, admitting no refusal or excuse. So doth God in such cases allow, and oblige us to deal with him, being instant and pertinacious in our requests; *giving him no rest*, (as the phrase is in Isa. 62. 7. the Prophet;) not enduring to be put off, or brooking any repulse; never being discouraged, or cast into despair, by any delay, or semblance of neglect. We may *wrestle with God*, like Jacob, Gen. 32. 26. and with Jacob may say, *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me*. Thus God suffereth himself to be prevailed upon,

and is willingly overcome : thus Omnipotence may be mastered, and a happy victory may be gained over Invincibility it self. Heaven sometime may be forced by storm; (or by the assaults of extremely-fervent prayer;) it assuredly will yield to a long siege. God will not ever hold out against the attempts of an obstinate suppliant. So *the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.* We read in S. John's Gospel of a man, that, being thirty eight years diseased, did wait at the pool of *Bethesda* seeking relief: him our Lord pitied, and helped, crowning his patience with miraculous relief, and proposing it for an example to us of perseverance. It is said of the Patriarch *Isaac*, that *he intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.* Whereupon S. * Chrysostome doth observe, that he had persevered twenty years in that petition.

Of good success to this practice we have many assurances in Holy Scripture.

Lam. 3. 25. *The Lord is good unto them that wait for him;*
 Isa. 30. 18. *to the soul that seeketh him. Blessed*
 & 49. 23. *are all they that wait for him. None*
 Psal. 25. 3. *that wait on him shall be ashamed.* * *They*
 & 37. 9. *that*
 * Isa. 40. 31.

that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint. So hath God assured by his Word, and engaged himself by promise, that he will yield unto constant and patient Devotion; so that it shall never want good success.

1 Chr. 28. 9.
Ezr. 8. 22.
Amos 5. 4.
2 Chr. 15. 2.
Psal. 9. 10.
Seeking God
the periphra-
sis of a reli-
gious man.
Psal. 14. 2.
& 24. 6. &
69. 6. & 70. 4.
& 119. 2. &
10. 4.

Without this practice we cannot indeed hope to obtain those precious things; they will not come at an easie rate, or be given for a song; a lazy wish or two cannot fetch them down from Heaven. God will not bestow them at first asking, or deal them out in one lump: but it is upon assiduous soliciting, and by gradual communication, that he dispenseth them. So his wise good will for many special reasons disposeth him to proceed: that we may (as it becometh and behoveth us) abide under a continual sense of our natural impotency and penury; of our dependence upon God, and obligation to him for the free collation of those best gifts: that by some difficulty of procuring them we may be minded of their worth, and induced the more to prize them: that by earnestly seeking them

we

we may improve our spiritual appetites, and excite holy affections: that by much conversing with Heaven, our minds may be raised above earthly things, and our hearts purified from fordid desires: that we may have a constant employment answerable to the best capacities of our Souls, worthy our care and pain, yielding most solid profit and pure delight unto us: that, in fine, by our greater endeavour in religious practice we may obtain a more ample reward thereof.

Matt. 6. 8.

For the same reason indeed that we pray at all, we should pray thus, with continued instance. We do not pray to instruct or advise God; not to tell him news, or inform him of our wants: (*He knows them*, as our Saviour telleth us, *before we ask*;) nor do we pray by dint of argument to persuade God, and bring him to our bent; nor that by fair speech we may cajoul him, or move his affections toward us by pathetical orations: not for any such purpose are we obliged to pray. But for that it becometh, and behoveth us so to doe; because it is a proper instrument of bettering, ennobling, and perfecting our Souls; because it breedeth most holy
 affec-

affections, and pure satisfactions, and worthy resolutions; because it fitteth us for the enjoyment of happiness, and lea-
deth us thither : for such ends Devoti-
on is prescribed ; and constant perseve-
rance therein being needfull to those
purposes, (praying by fits and starts not
sufficing to accomplish them ,) there-
fore such perseverance is required of us.
Farther,

V. *Praying incessantly* may import ,
that we do with all our occupations
and all occurrences interlace devout e-
jaculations of prayer and praise ; lifting
up our hearts to God, and breathing
forth expressions of devotion , suitable
to the objects and occasions which pre-
sent themselves. This as it nearly doth
approach to the punctual accomplish-
ment of what our Text prescribeth ; so
it seemeth required by S. Paul, when he
biddeth us *pray always ἐν παντί, in* Eph. 6. 18.
spirit , and to sing *ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ, in the* & 5. 19.
heart : that is, with very frequent ele-
vations of spirit in holy thoughts, and
desires toward Heaven ; with oppor-
tune resentments of heart, directing
thanks and praise to God. We cannot
ever be framing or venting long Prayers
with

Sed non satis perspiciunt quantum natura humani ingenii valeat, quæ ita est agilis & velox, sic in omnem partem (ut ita dixerim) spectat, ut nè possit quidem aliquid agere tantum unum; in plura verò non eodem die modo, sed eodem temporis momento, vim suam impendat.
Quint. I. 12.

Μνημονεύειν ὅς Θεὸς
μᾶλλον ἢ ἀναπνεύσειν. καὶ
εἰ οἷόν τε τὸ εἰπεῖν, μὴ δὲ
ἄλλο τι ἢ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ.
Naz. Or. 33.

with our lips, but almost ever our mind can throw pious glances, our heart may dart good wishes upwards; so that hardly any moment (any considerable space of time) shall pass without some lightsome flashes of Devotion. As bodily respiration, without intermission or impediment, doth concur with all our actions: so may that breathing of Soul, which preserveth our spiritual life, and ventilateth that holy flame within us, well conspire with all other occupations. For Devotion is of a nature so spiritual, so subtile and penetrant, that no matter can exclude or obstruct it. Our Minds are so exceedingly nimble and active, that no business can hold pace with them, or exhaust their attention and activity. We can never be so fully possessed by any employment, but that divers vacuities of time do intercurr, wherein our thoughts and affections will be diverted to other matters. As a Covetous man, what-ever beside he is doing, will be carking about his bags and treasures;
an

an Ambitious man will be devising on his plots and projects ; a Voluptuous man will have his mind in his dishes ; a Lascivious man will be doting on his amours ; a Studious man will be musing on his notions ; every man , according to his particular inclination , will lard his business , and besprinkle all his actions with cares and wishes tending to the enjoyment of what he most esteemeth and affecteth : so may a good Christian , through all his undertakings , wind in devout reflexions and pious motions of Soul toward the chief object of his mind and affection . Most businesses have wide gaps , all have some chinks , at which Devotion may slip in . Be we never so urgently set , or closely intent upon any work , (be we feeding , be we travelling , be we trading , be we studying ,) nothing yet can forbid , but that we may together wedge in a thought concerning God's Goodness , and bolt forth a word of praise for it ; but that we may reflect on our sins , and spend a penitential sigh on them ; but that we may descry our need of God's help , and dispatch a brief petition for it : a *God be praised* , a *Lord have mercy* , a *God bless* or *God help me* , will no-
wise

Vid. Chrys.
Orat. 5. in
Annam, Tom.
V. p. 78, 79.

Εἰμὲ καὶ ἡ
ἀνομιαν, Ἐλέ-
ησον με, ὁ
Θεός, καὶ ἀπ-
ήλυστά μου ἡ
εὐχὴ. Chrys.
ibid.

wise interrupt or disturb our proceedings. As worldly cares and desires do often intrude and creep into our Devotions, distracting and defiling them: so may spiritual thoughts and holy affections insinuate themselves into, and hal- low our secular transactions. This practice is very possible, and it is no less expedient: for that if our employments be not thus seasoned, they can have no true life or savour in them; they will in themselves be dead and putrid, they will be foul and noisome, or at least flat and insipid unto us.

There are some other good meanings of this Precept, according to which Holy Scripture, (back'd with good Reason) obligeth us to observe it: but those (together with the general Inducements to the practice of this Duty,) that I may not farther now trespass on your patience, I shall reserve to another opportunity.



The Seventh Sermon.

I THES. 5. 17.

Pray without ceasing.

WHAT the *Prayer* here in-
joyned by *S. Paul* doth im-
port, and how by it univer-
sally all sorts of Devotion should be un-
derstood, we did formerly discourse.
How also according to divers senses
(grounded in Holy Scripture, and en-
forced by good Reason) we may per-
form this duty *incessantly*, we did then
declare; five such senses we did menti-
on, and prosecute: I shall now adde
two or three more, and press them.

VI. *Praying* then *incessantly* may im-
ply, that we do appoint certain times
conveniently distant for the practice of
Devotion, and carefully observe them.
To keep the *Jews* in a constant exercise
of Divine worship, God did constitute
a Sa-

Dan. 8. 11. a Sacrifice, which was called *Tamidh*;
 Heb. 13. 15. (ἡ διαπύλωτος θυσία) *the continual sacrifice*. And as that Sacrifice being constantly offered at set times, was thence denominated *continual*; so may we, by punctually observing fit returns of Devotion, be said to pray *incessantly*.

And great reason there is that we should doe so. For we know that all persons who would not lead a loose and flattering life, but design with good assurance and advantage to prosecute an orderly course of action, are wont to distribute their time into several parcells; assigning some part thereof to the necessary refection of their bodies, some to the convenient relaxation of their minds, some to the dispatch of their ordinary affairs, some also to familiar conversation, and interchanging good offices with their friends; considering, that otherwise they shall be uncertain, and *unstable in all their ways*. And in this distribution of time Devotion surely should not lack its share: it rather justly claimeth the choicest portion to be allotted thereto; as being incomparably the noblest part of our duty, and mainest concernment of our lives. The feeding our Souls and nourishing our spiritual life,
 the

Cur ipsi aliquid forensibus negotiis, aliquid desideris amicorum, aliquid rationibus domesticis, aliquid cura corporis, nonnihil voluptati quotidie damus?
 Quint. I. 12.

the refreshing our spirits with those no less pleasant then wholesome exercises, the driving on our correspondence and commerce with Heaven, the improving our friendship and interest with God, are affairs which above all others do best deserve, and most need being secured. They must not therefore be left at random, to be done by the bye, as it hitteth by chance, or as the fancy taketh us. If we do not depute vacant seasons, and fix periodical returns for Devotion, engaging our selves by firm resolution, and inuring our minds by constant usage to the strict observance of them, secluding from them, as from sacred enclosures, all other businesses; we shall often be dangerously tempted to neglect it, we shall be commonly listless to it, prone to defer it, easily seduced from it by the encroachment of other affairs, or enticement of other pleasures. It is requisite that our Souls also (no less then our Bodies) should have their meals, settled at such intervals as the maintenance of their life, their health, their strength and vigour do require; that they may not perish or languish for want of timely repasts; that a good appetite may duly spring

Q

up,

up, prompting and instigating to them; that a sound temper and robust constitution of Soul may be preserved by them.

Heb. 12. 1.

Prayers are the bulwarks of Piety and good Conscience, the which ought to be placed so as to flank and relieve one another, together with the inter-jacent spaces of our life; that the enemy (*the sin which doth so easily beset us*) may not come on between, or at any time assault us, without a force sufficiently near to reach and repell him.

In determining these seasons and measures of time according to just proportion, honest prudence (weighing the several conditions, capacities and circumstances of each person) must arbitrate. For some difference is to be made between a Merchant and a Monk; between those who follow a Court, and those who reside in a Cloister or a College. Some men having great encumbrances of business and duty, by necessity imposed on them, which consume much of their time, and engage their thoughts; of them in reason neither so frequent recourses to, nor so long continuance in prayer can be demanded, as from those who enjoy more abundant leisure, and
free

freer scope of thoughts. But some fit times all may, and must allow, which no avocation of business, no distraction of care should purloin from them.

Certain seasons and periods of this kind Nature it self (in correspondence to her unalterable revolutions) doth seem to define and prescribe : those which the Royal Prophet recommen-

deth, when he saith, *It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy Name, O thou most High : To shew forth thy loving-kindness every morning, and thy faithfulness every night.* Psal. 92. 1.
55 17.

Every Day we do recover and receive a new life from God ; every Morning we do commence business, or revive it ; from our bed of rest and security we then issue forth , exposing our selves to the cares and toils, to the dangers, troubles and temptations of the world : then especially therefore it is reasonable, that we should sacrifice thanks to the gracious Preserver of our life, and the faithfull Restorer of its supports and comforts ; that we should crave his direction and help in the pursuit of our honest undertakings ; that to his protection from sin and mischief we should recommend our selves and our affairs ;

Q 2 . that,

that, by offering up to him the first-fruits of our diurnal labours, we should consecrate and consign them all to his blessing ; that as we are then wont to salute all the world, so then chiefly with humble obeisance we should accost him, who is ever present with us, and continually watchfull over us. Then also peculiarly Devotion is most seasonable, because then our minds being less prepossessed and pestered with other cares, our fancies becoming lively and gay, our memories fresh and prompt, our spirits copious and brisk, we are better disposed for it.

Every Night also reason calleth for these Duties ; requiring that we should close our business, and wind up all our cares in Devotion ; that we should then bless God for his gracious preservation of us from the manifold hazzards and the sins to which we stood obnoxious ; that we should implore his mercy for the manifold neglects and transgressions of our duty, which through the day past we have incurred ; that our minds being then so tired with study and care, our spirits so wasted with labour and toil, that we cannot any longer sustain ourselves, but do of our own accord sink
down

down into a posture of death, we should, as dying men, resign our Souls into God's hand, depositing our selves and our concerns into his custody, who alone *doth never sleep nor slumber*; praying that he would guard us from all the dangers and disturbances incident to us in that state of forgetfulness, and *interregnum* of our Reason; that he would grant us a happy resurrection in safety and health, with a good and chearfull mind, enabling us thereafter comfortably to enjoy our selves, and delightfully to serve him.

Thus if we do constantly bound and circumscribe our days, dedicating those most remarkable breaks of time unto God's service, since beginning and end do comprehend the whole, seeing in the computation and style of *Moses Evening and Morning* do constitute a Day; we may with some good congruity be said to pray incessantly.

Especially if at the middle distance between those extremes we are wont to interpose somewhat of Devotion. For as then usually our spirits, being somewhat shattered and spent, do need a recruit, enabling us to pass through the residue of the day with its incumbent

business : so then it would doe well, and may be requisite, in a meal of Devotion to refresh our Souls with spiritual sustenance, drawn from the never-failing store-house of Divine grace ; which may so fortifie us, that with due vigour and alacrity we may perform the ensuing duties to God's honour , and our own comfort. Thus to practise was the resolution of the Psalmist , that great

Psal. 55. 17. Master of Devotion ; *Evening, (said he) and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud.* And this was the custom of the noble *Daniel*, from which no occasion could divert, no hazzard could deter him : *He kneeled, saith the story, upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God.*

Dan. 6. 10.

These are times which it is necessary, or very expedient, that all men (even persons of highest rank, and greatest employment) should observe. These even of old were the practices of Religious persons, not expressly prescribed by God's Law, but assumed by themselves ; good reason suggesting them to the first practisers , and the consenting example of pious men afterward enforcing them.

God indeed did himself in his Law, or by his Prophets, appoint publick and

solemn celebrations of worship to himself, in Sacrifices (involving Prayer, and accompanied therewith) constantly to be offered every morning and evening ; religious Princes also did institute services of thanksgiving and praise to be performed at those times : but there doth not appear any direct institution of private Devotion, or its circumstances ; but the practice thereof seemeth originally to have been purely voluntary, managed and measured according to the reason, by the choice of each person : yet so, that the practice of eminently-good men leading, and others following, it grew into a kind of common law, or standing rule, (seeming to carry an obligation with it,) to observe the times specified.

Besides those three times, there were farther other middle times observed by devout people, who had leisure, and disposition of mind thereto ; once between morning and noon, and once between noon and evening were sequestered to that purpose : whence in the *Acts* the ninth hour of the day (that is, the middle intervall between noon and evening) is called *the hour of prayer*. Yea, some did impose on themselves

2 Chro. 2.4.
1 Chron. 16.
40.41. & 23.
30.
Ezr. 3. 3.

Act. 3. 1.

the observation of two other times, one between evening and midnight, the other between midnight and morn. To which practice those places in the

Pfal. 63, 5, 6. Psalms do seem to allude; My mouth shall praise thee with joyfull lips, when I remember thee on my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches. I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: Mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I may meditate on thy word. And plainly the whole number of those times, which the Psalmist observed, is expressed in those words, Seven times a day will I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments. Which examples whoever shall chuse to follow, (in any measure) he shall doe wisely and commendably; he shall certainly have no cause to repent; he will find it richly worth his while; great benefit and comfort will thence accrue unto him.

Pfal. 119. 147, 148.

Pf. 119, 164.

If indeed *Jews* were so liberal in assigning, so punctual in affording such portions of time for yielding praise and offering supplications unto God; how much more free and ready, more carefull and diligent should we be in this way of practice? we, who have a Religion so far more spiritual, and exempt from

from corporeal incumbrances; Precepts so more exprefs and clear; so much higher obligations, and stronger encouragements to this duty; whom God in especial manner so graciously doth invite, so powerfully doth attract unto himself? But farther,

VII. More especially this Precept may be supposed to exact from us a compliance in carefully observing the times of Devotion ordained by publick Authority, or settled by general Custom. This in a popular and legal sense is doing a thing indefinently, when we perform it so often as is required by law or custom. So the Apostle to the *Hebrews* saith of the *Priests*, that *they* Levit. 19. 37. & 26. 2. Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary. *went always into the Tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God: always,* that is, at all the solemn times appointed. And thus of the Apostles it is affirmed by *S. Luke*, that *they were continually in* Heb. 9. 6. Luk. 24. 53. *the Temple, blessing and praising God;* that is, they constantly resorted thither at the stated times of concourse for prayer. This good Reason also plainly doth injoyn: For that the neglecting it is not onely a disorderly behaviour in a matter of high consequence; a criminal dis-

disregard and disobedience to Authority ; a scandalous contempt of our neighbours, from whose laudable fashion we discost ; a wrongfull deserting the publick , to whose good , mainly promoted by the publick worship of God , we do owe the contribution of our endeavour : but a hainous affront to Almighty God , who thereby is plainly dishonoured, and in a manner openly disavowed ; a huge prejudice to Religion , the credit and power whereof , without visible profession , exemplary compliance, mutual consent and encouragement , cannot be upheld. Were there times by law or custom defined , (as in some places indeed there are,) when all men should be required in person solemnly to attend on their Prince, for professing their Allegiance, or deferring any Homage to him ; would not those who should wilfully refuse or decline appearance, be justly chargeable as guilty of dishonouring and wronging him ? would not their such defaultance pass for sufficient proof , that they do not acknowledge him, that at least they do not much regard or value him ? So by not joyning at stated times in celebration of Divine worship,
we

we may be well conceived wholly to disclaim God, or greatly to disesteem him ; to slight Religion, as a thing insignificant and unprofitable. Do we not indeed thereby more then intimate, that we little believe God to be our Sovereign Lord, and Governour ; that we stand in no great awe or dread of him ; that we are not much sensible of his benefits and mercies ; that we repose small trust or hope in him ; that we do not take our selves much to want his protection, his guidance, his assistance, his favour and mercy ? Are we not in effect like unto those in *Job*, who say unto God , Depart *Job 21. 14,* from us ; for we desire not the knowledge *15.* of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him ? or what profit shall we have, if we pray unto him ? Thus the standers by commonly (some so as to be much offended at, others so as to be corrupted by our bad example) will interpret this neglect : and so assuredly God himself will take it from us , and accordingly deal with us. As he claimeth this publick attendance on him for his due : (Give, proclaimeth he by the mouth of one of his great Heralds, Give *Psal. 29. 1, 2.* unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the *66. 2.* Lord glory and strength : Give unto the Lord

Lord the glory due to his Name ; worship the Lord in the beauty of Holiness :) so if we to his wrong and disgrace refuse to yield it, we shall certainly find answerable resentment and recompence from him ; that as we are careless to serve him, so he will be unmindfull to bless us ; as we are backward to avow and glorifie him, so he will not be forward to own and grace us ; as we do so deny him before men, so he will deny us before them also. What other measure indeed can we imagine, or expect to receive ? Will God, think we, be so partial and fond to us, so disregardfull and injurious toward himself, that he will vouchsafe to appear in favour to us, when we deign not to appear in respect to him ? that he will openly tender our repute, when we apparently disregard his honour ? that he will employ his wisdom, or exert his power in our behalf, when we scarce will think a thought, or stir a step for his service ? Can we hope, that he will freely dispense prosperous success to our enterprises, when we either care not, or scorn to implore his help ? that he will reach forth undeserved blessings to us, when we subtract due praises from him ?
that

2 Tim. 2. 12.

Matt. 10. 33.

Luk. 9. 26.

12. 9.

that he will any-wise shew himself bountifull and mercifull toward us, when we so palpably are unjust and ingratefull toward him? No, *Surely he scorneth the scorners*; and, *Whosoever despiseth him, shall be lightly esteemed*: so he expressely hath threatned; and, seeing he is both infallibly true, and invincibly able, we may reasonably presume that he will accomplish his word.

Prov. 3. 34.
1 Sam. 2. 30.

VIII. Lastly, *Praying incessantly* may import at large a frequency in Devotion. This the words at least do exact, or necessarily imply, however expounded. For doing *incessantly* cannot imply less then doing *frequently*: in no tolerable sense can we be said to doe that continually, which we doe seldom; but it is an ordinary scheme of speech to say that a man doeth that always, which he is wont to doe, and performeth often. As of the pious souldier *Cornelius* it is said, that he gave much *alms to the people, and prayed to God always*; and of *Anna* the Prophetess, that she departed not from the Temple, but served God with prayers and fastings night and day; that is, she frequently resorted to the Temple, and served God with

Act. 10. 2.

Luk. 2. 37.

with an assiduous constancy. As the words may bear, and do involve this sense, so doth the reason of the case enforce it: for very just, very fit, very needfull it is to practise thus. There is ever at hand abundant reason for, and apposite matter of Devotion; therefore no large space of time should pass without it: there be perpetually depending many causes thereof; whence there is not to be allowed any long vacation from it. As every moment we from God's mercy and bounty partake great favours; so should we often render thanks and praise for them: for perpetually to receive courtesies, and rarely to return acknowledgments, is notorious ingratitude and iniquity. We frequently (and in a manner continually) do fall into sins; often therefore we are obliged to confess sins, we are concerned to deprecate wrath, and beg mercy: otherwise we must long crouch under the sore burthen of guilt, the sad dread of punishment, the bitter pangs of remorse, or the desperate hazzard of stupid obduration. What-ever we design or undertake, toward the good management and happy success thereof we (being ignorant and impotent creatures)

do

do need the guidance, the assistance, and the blessing of God : so often therefore it is requisite that we should be seeking and suing for them : if not, we do not onely transgress our duties, but fondly neglect, or foully betray our own concernments. The Causes therefore of Devotion being so constant, the Effects in some correspondence should be frequent.

Such frequency is indeed necessary for the breeding, the nourishment, the growth and improvement of all Piety. Devotion is that holy and heavenly fire, which darteth into our minds the light of spiritual knowledge, which kindleth in our hearts the warmth of holy desires : if therefore we do continue long absent from it, a night of darkness will overspread our minds, a deadning coldness will seise upon our affections. It is the best food of our Souls, which preserveth their life and health, which repaireth their strength and vigour, which rendreth them lusty and active : if we therefore long abstain from it, we shall starve, or pine away ; we shall be faint and feeble in all religious performances ; we shall have none at all, or a very languid and meager Piety.

To

To maintain in us a constant and steady disposition to obedience, to correct our perverse inclinations, to curb our unruly passions, to strengthen us against temptations, to comfort us in anxieties and distresses, we do need continual supplies of grace from God; the which ordinarily are communicated in Devotion, as the channel which conveyeth, or the instrument which helpeth to procure it, or the condition upon which it is granted. Faith, Hope, Love, spiritual Comfort and Joy, all Divine Graces are chiefly elicited, expressed, exercised therein and thereby: it is therefore needfull that it should frequently be used; seeing otherwise we shall be in danger to fail in discharging our chief Duties, and to want the best Graces.

It is frequency of Devotion also which maintaineth that Friendship with God, which is the soul of Piety. As familiar conversation (wherein men do express their minds and affections mutually) breedeth acquaintance, and cheriseth good will of men to one another; but long forbearance thereof dissolveth, or slackneth the bonds of amity, breaking their intimacy, and cooling their

their kindness: so is it in respect to God; it is frequent converse with him which begetteth a particular acquaintance with him, a mindfull regard of him, a hearty liking to him, a delightful tast of his goodness, and consequently a sincere and solid good will toward him; but intermission thereof produceth estrangement, or enmity toward him. If we seldom come at God, we shall little know him, not much care for him, scarce remember him, rest insensible of his love, and regardless of his favour; a coldness, a shyness, a distast, an antipathy toward him will by degrees creep upon us. Abstinence from his company and presence will cast us into conversations destructive, or prejudicial to our friendship with him; wherein soon we shall contract familiarity and friendship with his enemies, (the World and the Flesh,) which are inconsistent with love to him, which will dispose us to forget him, or to dislike and loath him.

It is, in fine, the frequency of Devotion which alone can secure any practice thereof, at least any practice thereof duly qualified; so hearty, so easy; so sweet and delightfull as it should be. We have all a naturall
R averse-

averſeneſs or indiſpoſition thereto, as requiring an abſtraction of thoughts and affections from ſenſible things, and a faſtning them upon objects purely ſpiritual; a rearing our heavy ſpirits above their common pitch; a ſtaying and ſettling our roving fancies; a compoſing our vain hearts in a ſober and ſteddy frame, agreeable to Devotion: to effect which things is a matter of no ſmall difficulty and pain; which therefore without much uſe and exerciſe cannot be accompliſhed; but with it, may; ſo that by frequent practice the bent of our heart being turned, the ſtrangeneſs of the thing ceaſing, the difficulty of the work being ſurmounded, we ſhall obtain a good propenſion to the duty, and a great ſatisfaction therein.

This will render the way into God's preſence ſmooth and paſſable; removing, as all other obſtacles, ſo particularly thoſe of fear and doubt in reſpect to God, which may deterr or diſcourage us from approaching to him. God being moſt holy and pure, moſt great and glorious, we, ſenſible of our corruption and vileness, may be fearfull and ſhy of coming near unto him. But when, coming into his preſence, we do find,

that

that *such as his Majesty is, such is his Mercy*; when we do *tast and see that the Lord is good*; when by experience we feel, that *in his presence there is fulness of joy*; being *abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house*; having our Souls there *satisfied as with marrow and fatness*; finding, that *a day in his courts is better then a thousand spent other-where*; perceiving that he biddeth us welcome, that he treateth us kindly, that he sendeth us away refreshed with sweetest comforts, and rewarded with most excellent benefits: this will not onely reconcile our hearts to Devotion, but draw us into a cordial liking, and earnest desire thereof; such as the Psalmist expresseth, when he saith, *My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.* This will engage us into strong resolutions of constantly practising it; such as the same Holy person again declareth in those words, *I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications: Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.* Hence, in stead of a suspicious estrangedness, a servile dread, or an ho-

Psal. 34. 8.

Psal. 16. 11.

Psal. 36. 8.

Psal. 63. 5.

Psal. 84. 10.

Psal. 84. 2.

Psal. 116. 1.
138. 2.

The Seventh Sermon.

stile disaffection toward God, there will spring up an humble confidence, a kindly reverence, a hearty love toward him; which will upon all occasions drive us to him, hoping for his friendly succour, longing after his kind embraces. So will the frequency of Devotion render it facil and pleasant. Whereas, on the contrary, disuse thereof will make it at any time hard and irksome; strengthening and encreasing our natural averfeness thereto: performing it seldom, we shall never perform it well; with that attention, that affection, that promptitude, that willingness and alacrity, which are due thereto.

According to so many senses, in so many respects, may we, and should we observe this Precept. From thus praying continually there can be no good exception, or just excuse. The most common pleas that will be alleged for the omission thereof are two; one drawn from external avocations, the other from internal indispositions, obstructing it: both of which are so far from being good, that, being scanned, they will soon appear serving rather to aggravate, than to excuse, or abate neglect.

I. I ca

I. I cannot (saith one) now attend to Prayers, because I am not at liberty, or at leisure, being urgently called away, and otherwise engaged by important affairs. How much a flammé this Apology is, we shall presently descry, by asking a few Questions about it.

1. Do we take Devotion it self to be no business, or a business of no consideration? Do we conceit, when we pay God his debts, or discharge our duties toward him, when we crave his aid or mercy, when we solicit the main concernments of our Soul, (yea, of our body also, and its estate,) that we are idle, or misemployed? that we lavish our time, or lose our pains?

2. What other affairs can we have of greater moment or necessity then this? Can there be any obligation more indispensable, then is that of yielding due respect and service to our Maker, our great Patron, our most liberal Benefactor? Can there be any interest more close or weighty then this, of providing for our Souls eternal health and happiness? Is not this indeed the great work, *the onely necessary matter*, in comparison whereto all other occupations
Luk. 10. 24.
Job 23. 12.

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are

The Seventh Sermon.

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Luk. 10. 24.
Job 23. 12.

Αἱ τέχναι
καὶ μὲν ἐν
ἐργαίᾳ εἰσιν·
ἐργον δὲ ἡ
διουσίαια.
Const. Apost.
2. 61.

are meer trifling, or unprofitable fiddling about nothing? What will all other business signifie, what will come of it, if this be neglected? Busie we may be, we may plod, we may drudge eternally; but all to no end. All our care is in effect improvidence, all our industry may be well reckoned idleness, if God be not served, if our Souls are not secured.

3. If we survey and prize all worldly businesses, which among them will appear so importunate as to demand, so greedy as to devour, so worthy at least as to deserve all our time, that we cannot spare a few minutes for maintaining our most pleasant intercourse, and most gainfull commerce with Heaven? What are the great businesses of the world? what but scraping and scrambling for pelf, contriving and compassing designs of ambition, courting the favour and respect of men, making provision for carnal pleasure, gratifying fond curiosity or vain humour? And do any of these deserve to be put into the scale against, shall all of them together be able to sway down our spiritual employments? Shall these images, these shadows of business supplant or crowd out

out Devotion ; that which procureth wealth inestimably precious, pleasure infinitely satisfactory, honour incomparably noble above all this world can afford ? If the expence of time be (as the Philosopher said) πολυτέλειον ἀνάλωμα, *the most precious expence* that can be ; how can it better be laid out, then upon the worthiest things, such as Devotion alone can afford the purchase and possession of ? True Vertue, sound Wisdom, a quiet Conscience, and steady tranquillity of mind, the love and favour of God, a title unto endless joy and bliss, are purely the gifts of Heaven ; and thence they will not descend of themselves, but Prayer must fetch them down. If nothing then in the world be comparable to those things, how can any time be so well spent as in Prayer, which acquireth them ; which also best secureth what-ever we have, and is the readiest way to procure what-ever we want ?

4. Should we not farther, honestly comparing things, easily discern, that it is no such indispensable business, but rather indeed some base dotage on lucre, some inveigling bait of pleasure, some bewitching transport of fancy, that crosseth

seth our Devotion? Is it not often a complemental visit, an appointment to tattle or to tipple, a match for sport, a wild ramble in vice or folly, that so deeply engageth us to put off our duty?

5. Yea, is it not commonly sloth rather than activity, an averfeness from this rather than an inclination to any other employment, which diverteth us from our Prayers? Is not, I say, the true reason why we pray so seldom, not because we are very busie, but because we are extreemly idle; so idle, that we cannot willingly take the pains to unscrew our affections from sensible things, to reduce our wandring thoughts, to compose our hearts into a right frame, to bend our untoward inclinations to a compliance with our duty? Is it not because we do not feel that favour and satisfaction in these, which we do in other trivial and worthless employments, nor will be at the trouble to work such dispositions in our Souls? Do we not betake our selves to other conversati-
ons and commerces meerly for refuge, shunning this intercourse with God, and with our selves? These, I fear, are oft-
ner the real causes of our neglecting
Devo-

Devotion, then any such mighty avocations which we pretend.

6. But were there indeed not onely a counterfeit or imaginary, but a real competition between Devotion and other lawfull business ; which, in reason, should carry it ? in conscience, which of the two should be forborn or suspended ? Is it not evidently better, that the pursuit of our temporal interests, what-ever they be, should be a little checked, then that our affairs of everlasting consequence should be quite laid aside ? that we should venture a small impairing of our estate, then surely endamage our Souls ? that we hazzard to disappoint or displease a man, then dare to affront and offend the Almighty God ?

7. Were it not strangely absurd and unhandsome to say, I cannot wait on God, because I must speak with a friend ; I cannot go to Church, although God calleth me thither, because I must hast to market ; I cannot stand to pray, because I am to receive money, or to make up a bargain ; I cannot discharge my duty to God, because a greater obligation then that doth lie upon me ? How unconceivable an honour, how unvalu-

unvaluable a benefit is it, that the incomprehensibly-great and glorious Majesty of Heaven doth vouchsafe us the liberty to approach so near unto him, to converse so freely with him, to demand and derive from his hand the supply of all our needs, and satisfaction of all our reasonable desires? and is it then just or seemly, by such comparisons to disparage his favour, by such pretences to baffle with his goodness?

Put the case our Prince should call for us to speak with him about matters nearly touching his service, and our welfare; would it be according unto duty, discretion, or decency, to reply, that we are at present busie, and have no leisure, and must therefore hold ourselves excused; but that if he will stay a while, at another time, when we have less to doe, we shall be perhaps disposed to wait upon him? The case is propounded by our Lord in that Parable, wherein God is represented as a great man, that had prepared a feast, and invited many guests thereto; but they

Matt. 22. 2,
&c.
Luk. 14. 16,
&c.

excused themselves: *One said, that he had purchased land, and must needs go out to see it; another had bought five yokes of oxen, and must go to prove them;*

ano-

another had married a wife, and therefore could not come. These indeed were affairs very considerable, as this world hath any; but yet the excuses did not satisfy: for, notwithstanding, the great person was angry, and took the neglect in huge disdain.

Ἐπειδὴ ὁ
ἀνὴρ τῶν
ταύτης προ-
σέ, &c.
Chrys. in
Joh. Orat.
II.

8. Moreover, if we reflect what vast portions of time we squander away upon our petty matters, upon voluptuous enjoyments, upon fruitless past-times, upon impertinent talk; how can we satisfy our selves in not allotting competent time upon God's Service, our own Salvation, and the future everlasting state? Doth not he, who with the continuance of our life bestoweth on us all our time, deserve that a pitance of it should be reserved for himself? Can all the world duly claim so great an allowance thereof? May not our Soul (which is far our noblest part, which indeed is all our selves) justly challenge a good share of our time to be expended on it? or shall this mortal husk engross it all? Must Eternity, which comprehendeth all Time, have no time belonging to it, or allotted for its concernsments?

9. Again,

Πρώτον μὲν, ἀπὸ τοῦ ὅτι
ἐγγενημα ἔμικρον, τὸ κω-
κλῆδιν τοσούτων περιγυμ-
νων πλῆθει, καὶ τοῖς βιωπι-
κῶς ἔτι περὶ πολλὰ διὰ
παντός, ὡς μηδ' ἔμικρον
οἷς τὰ πάντων ἀναγκαί-
α ἀρετὴν ἔχει. Chryl.
in Job. I. 14. (Or. II.)

9. Again, is it not great imprudence so to lay our business, that any other matter shall thwart or thrust out Devotion? Easily with a little providence may things be so ordered, that it, without interfering or justling, may well consist with all

other, both needfull business, and convenient divertisement; so that it shall neither obstruct them, nor they extrude it: and are we not very culpable, if we do not use so much providence?

10. In truth, attending upon Devotion can be no obstacle, but will be great furtherance to all other good business. It is the most sure, most pleasant, most advantageous and compendious way of transacting affairs, to mix Prayers and Praises with them: it is the best oil that can be, to make the wheels of action go on smoothly and speedily: it not onely sanctifieth our undertakings, but much promoteth and exceedingly sweetneth the management of them. For the conscience of having rendred unto God his due respect and service, of having intrusted our affairs to his care, of having consequently engaged his protection

tection and assistance for us, will dispose us to doe things with a courageous alacrity and comfortable satisfaction ; will fill us with a good hope of prospering ; will prepare us however to be satisfied with the event, what-ever it shall be ; will in effect procure a blessing and happy success , such as we may truly rejoyce and triumph in, as conferred by God in favour to us. Whereas neglecting these duties, we can have no solid content or savoury complacence in any thing we undertake : reflecting on such misbehaviour (if we be not downright infidels, or obdurate reprobates in impiety) will quash or damp our courage: having thence forfeited all pretence to God's succour, and provoked him to cross us, we must needs suspect disappointment : as we have no reasonable ground to hope for success ; so we cannot, if success arriveth, be heartily satisfied therein , or take it for a blessing.

He therefore that is such a niggard of his time, that he grudgeth to withhold any part thereof from his worldly occasions , deeming all time cast away , that is laid out in waiting upon God , is really most unthrifty and prodigal there-

thereof: by sparing a little, he wasteth all his time to no purpose; by so eagerly pursuing, he effectually setteth back his designs; by preposterously affecting to dispatch his affairs, he rendreth them endless, or, which is the same, altogether unprofitable.

In fine, we may be sure that no time is spent even so prudently and politickly, with so great advantage, and so real fruit to our selves, as that which is employed upon Devotion. In sacrificing his time, his pains, his substance, any thing he hath or can doe, to God's service, no man can be a loser.

We have also many examples plainly demonstrating the consistency of this practice with all other business. Who ever had more or greater affairs to manage, and who ever managed them with greater success, then *David*; upon whom did ly the burthen of a Royal estate, and the care over a most populous nation; the which *he fed with a faithfull and true heart, and ruled prudently with all his power*; who waged great wars, vanquished mighty enemies, atchieved many glorious exploits, underwent many grievous troubles? Yet could not such engagements distract or depress

depress his mind from a constant attendance on Devotion. *I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall be continually in my mouth. My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness, and thy salvation all the day. I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever.* So he declareth his resolution, and his practice. Who is more pressingly employed then was Daniel, first President over so vast a Kingdom, chief Minister of State to the greatest Monarch on earth? Yet constantly thrice a day did he pray, and give thanks before his God. Who can be more entangled in varieties and intricacies of care, of pains, of trouble, then was he that prescribeth unto us this rule of Praying continually? Upon him did ly the care of all the Churches; Night and day with labour and toil did he work for the sustenance of his life, that he might not (to the disparagement of the Gospel) burden any man; perpetually he was engaged in all sorts of labour and travail, ever conflicting with perils, with wants, with inconveniencies numberless: yet did he exactly conform his practice to his rule, being no less indefatigable and incessant in his Devotion then he was in his business. Who ever managed a greater

Psal. 34. 1.
& 71. 6. &
145. 2.
Psal. 35. 28.

Psal. 61. 4.

Dan. 6. 10.

2 Cor. 11. 28.

2 Thess. 3. 8.

Καυροῖς ἐκεί-
νης ἡμέρας
πολλοῖς αὐ-
τὸν ἐγκλείων,
μὴ μόνον
τῷ αὐτῷ
παραμιλεῖ
Θεῷ. Euseb.
de Vita Const.
4. 22.

greater Empire then *Constantine* ? Yet every day (as *Eusebius* reporteth) at stated times, shutting himself up, he alone privately did converse with his God. The most pious men indeed have never been idle or careless men, but always most busie and active, most industrious in their callings, most provident for their families, most officious toward their friends, most ready to serve their country, most abundant in all good works : yet have they always been most constant in Devotion. So that experience clearly doth evidence, how reconcilable much Devotion is to much business; and that, consequently, the prosecution of the one cannot well palliate the neglect of the other.

II. No better can any man ward himself from blame, by imputing the neglect of Devotion to some indisposition within him thereto. For this is one-ly to cover one fault with another, or to lay on a patch more ugly then the fore. 'Tis, in effect, to say we may sin, because we have a mind to it, or care not to doe otherwise. Our indisposition it self is criminal; and, as signifying somewhat habitual or settled, is worse then

then a single omission : it ought therefore to be corrected and cured ; and the way to do it is, by setting presently upon the practice of the Duty, and persisting resolutely therein : otherwise how is it possible that it should ever be removed ? The longer we forbear it, the more seldom we perform it, the stronger surely will our indisposition grow, and the more difficult it will be to remove it. But if (with any degree of seriousness and good intention) we come indisposed to Prayer, we may thereby be formed into better disposition ; and by continual attendance thereon, we shall (God's grace co-operating, which never is wanting to serious and honest intentions) grow toward a perfect fitness for it : Prayer by degrees will become natural and delightfull to us.





The Eighth Sermon.

EPHES. 5. 20.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God.

*Vid. Rom. 12.
Ephes. 6. &c.*

THESE words, although (as the very Syntax doth immediately discover) they bear a relation to, and have a fit coherence with those that precede, may yet (especially considering S. Paul's style, and manner of expression in the preceptive and exhortative part of his Epistles) without any violence, or prejudice on either hand, be severed from the Context, and considered distinctly by themselves. And (to avoid encumbrance by farther comparison) so taking them, we may observe, that every single word among them carries with it something of notable emphasis, and especial signification. The first [*Giving thanks*] expresses the substance of a Duty, to which

which we are exhorted. The next (I mean, in order of construction) [*to God*] denotes the Object, or Term to which it is directed. The following [*always*] determines the main Circumstance of this and all other Duties, the Time of performance. The last [*for all things*] declares the adequate Matter of the Duty, and how far it should extend. These particulars I shall consider severally, and in order.

I. First then, concerning the Duty it self, *to give thanks*, or rather, *to be thankfull*; (for $\delta\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ doth not onely signifie *gratias agere, reddere, dicere, to give, render, or declare thanks*, but also *gratias habere, gratè affectum esse, to be thankfully disposed*, to entertain a gratefull affection, sense, or memory : in which more comprehensive notion I mean to consider it, as including the whole Duty or Vertue of Gratitude due to Almighty God for all his benefits, favours and mercies :) I say, concerning this Duty it self, (abstractedly considered,) as it involves a respect to benefits or good things received; so in its employment about them it imports, requires, or supposes these following particulars.

S 2

1. It

1. It implies a right Apprehension of, and consequently a considerate Attention unto Benefits conferred. For he that is either wholly ignorant of his obligations, or mistakes them, or passes them over with a slight and superficial view, can no-wise be gratefull. *Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord. Men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doings.*
- Pfal. 107. 43. *The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all that have pleasure therein. O tast (first, and then) see that the Lord is good.*
- Pfal. 64. 9.
- Pfal. 111. 2.
- Pfal. 34. 8.

Pfal. 28. 5.
Isa. 5. 12.

This is the method that great Master of Thanksgiving prescribes; first experimental notice, then wise consideration, then gratefull sense, then publick acknowledgment. And those we find both by him, and by the Prophet *Isaias* (in the very same words) reprehended, as wickedly ingratefull persons, who regarded not the work of the Lord, nor considered the operation of his hands. 'Tis part therefore of this Duty incumbent on us, to take notice of diligently, and carefully to consider the Divine Benefits; not to let them pass undiscerned,

ned, and unregarded by us, as persons either wofully blind, or stupidly drowzie, or totally unconcerned.

'Tis a general fault, that the most common and frequent, the most obvious and conspicuous Favours of God, (like the ordinary *Phænomena* of Nature, which, as *Aristotle* observes, though in themselves most admirable, are yet least admired,) the constant rising of the Sun upon us, the descent of fruitfull Showrs, the recourse of temperate Seasons, the continuance of our Life, the enjoyment of Health, the providential dispensation of Wealth, and competent means of livelihood, the daily Protection from incident dangers, the helps of improving Knowledge, obtaining Vertue, becoming happy, and such like most excellent Benefits, we commonly little mind or regard; and consequently seldom return the thanks due for them. Possibly some rare accidents of Providence, some extraordinary Judgment, some miraculous Deliverance may rouze and awaken our attention: (as it is said of the *Israelites*, *When he slew them, then they sought him, and remembred that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer:*) but

Ps. 78. 34, 35.

such advertency is not the effect so much of Gratitude, as of curiosity, or of necessity : the notable rarity invites, or some powerfull impulse commands our notice. But the truly gratefull industriously design, and are studious to know thoroughly their obligations, that they may be able to render answerable returns for them.

Ἀχαιοὶ
ὅστις ἐν πα-
σὶν ἀμύμω-
στοι.

Sen. 3. de Be-
nef. cap. 1.

2. This Duty requires a faithfull Retention of Benefits in memory, and consequently frequent Reflexions upon them. For, he that is no longer affected with a Benefit then it incurs the sense, and suffers not it self to be disregarded, is far from being gratefull ; nay, if we believe the Philosopher, is ingratefull in the worst kind, and highest degree. For, *Ingratus est, (saith he) qui beneficium accepisse se negat, quod accipit ; ingratius est, qui dissimulat ; ingratius, qui non reddit : ingratiissimus omnium, qui oblitus est.* He that falsly denies the reception of a Benefit, and he that dissimulates it, and he that doth not repay it, is ingratefull ; but most ingratefull of all is he that forgets it. It is a sign the Benefit made no deep impression on his mind, since it left no discernible footstep there ; that he hardly ever thought

of making recompence, since he hath suffered himself to become altogether incapable of doing it : neither is there any hope of his amending the past neglect ; no shame, no repentance, no fair occasion can redeem him from Ingratitude, in whom the very remembrance of his obligation is extinguished.

If to be sensible of a present good turn, deserved the title of Gratitude ; all men certainly would be gratefull : the *Jews* questionless were so. When Almighty God, by his wonderfull power, in extraordinary ways, delivered them from the tyranny and oppression of their prevalent enemies ; when he caused streams to gush forth from the bowels of a hard rock, to refresh their thirst ; when bread descended from Heaven in showers, and the winds were winged with flesh, to satisfy their greedy desires ; then surely they were not altogether unsensible of the Divine goodness ; then could they acknowledge his power, and be forward enough to engage themselves in promises of correspondent observance toward him for the future. But the mischief was, immediately after, as the *Psalmist* complains, *They forgot his works, and the wonders he had shewed* Pl. 78. 11, 42.

shewed them : They remembred not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy. They refused to obey, neither were mindfull of the wonders that God did among them ; as Nehemiah confesses in their behalf. Of the Rock that begat them they were unmindfull, and forgot the God that formed them ; as it is in Deuteronomy. They distrusted his Promises, repined at his dealings, disobeyed his Laws, and treacherously apostatized from his Covenant. Such were the fruits of their ingratefull forgetfulness ; which therefore that people is so often charged with, and so sharply reprov'd for by the Prophets.

On the contrary, we find that great pattern of Gratitude, the Royal Prophet *David*, continually revolving in his thoughts, imprinting upon his fancy, studying and meditating upon, recollecting and renewing in his memory the results of Divine favour. *I will remember, saith he, thy wonders of old ; I will meditate of all thy works, and talk of thy doings : and, I remember the days of old, I meditate on all thy works, I muse on the works of thy hands : and, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits : and, My mouth shall praise thee with joy-*

Thy loving-kindness is ever before mine eyes.
 Psal. 26. 3.
 Pl. 77. 11, 12.
 Psal. 143. 5.
 Psal. 103. 2.
 Pl. 63. 5, 6, 7.

full

full lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches, because thou hast been my help. No place unfit, it seems, no time unseasonable, for the practice of this Duty; not the place designed for rest, not the time due to sleep, but, as *David* thought, more due to a wakefull contemplation of the Divine goodness. Whose vigilant Gratitude we should strive to imitate, devoting our most solitary and retired, our most sad and serious thoughts (not the studies onely of our closet, but the consultations also of our pillow) to the preservation of those blessed Idea's; that neither length of time may deface them in our fancy, nor other care thrust them out thence.

It was a satyrical answer, (that of *Aristotle*,) and highly opprobrious to mankind; who being asked, *Τί τάχιστα γηράσκει*; What doth the soonest grow old? replied, *Χάρις*, Thanks: and so was that adagiall verse, *Ἄμ' ἤλέη, καὶ τέθνηκεν ἡ χάρις*. No sooner the courtesie born, then the resentment thereof dead. Such reproachfull Aphorisms we should labour to confute, especially as they are applicable to the Divine favours, by so maintaining and cherishing our thanks for them,

them, that they neither decay with age, nor prematurely die, nor be buried in oblivion; but may resemble the pictures and poetical descriptions of the Graces, those goodly Daughters of Heaven, smiling always with a never-fading serenity of countenance, and flourishing in an immortal youth.

The middle, we may observe, and the safest, and the fairest, and the most conspicuous places in Cities are usually deputed for the erections of Statues and Monuments dedicated to the memory of worthy men, who have nobly deserved of their Countries. In like manner should we in the heart and centre of our Soul, in the best and highest apartments thereof, in the places most exposed to ordinary observation, and most secure from the invasions of worldly care, erect lively representations of, and lasting memorials unto the Divine bounty; constantly attending to which we may be disposed to Gratitude. Not one blessing, not the least favourable passage of Providence ought to perish with us, though long since past, and removed out of the sphere of present sense.

We must not in our Old age forget
 Psal. 71. 6. who formed us in the Womb, who brought

brought us into the light, who suckled our Infancy, who educated our Childhood, who governed our Youth, who conducted our Manhood through the manifold hazzards, troubles and disasters of life. Nor in our Prosperity, our affluence of good things, our possession of *Canaan*, should we be unmindfull of him who relieved us in our streights, who supplied our wants, sustained our adversity, who redeemed us from *Egypt*, and led us through the wilderness. A succession of new and fresh Benefits should not (as among some Savages the manner is for the young to make away the old) supplant and expunge ancient ones, but make them rather more dear and venerable to us. Time should not weaken or diminish, but rather confirm and radicate in us the remembrance of God's goodness; to render it, as it doth gold and wine, more precious, and more strong. We have usually a memory more then enough tenacious of injuries and ill turns done us: let it never be said, to the disgrace of that noble faculty, that we can hardly forget the discourtesies of man, but not easily remember the favours of God. But farther,

Deut. 6. 12.
8. 11.

3. This

3. This Duty implies a due Esteem, and valuation of Benefits ; that the nature and quality, the measure and quantity , the circumstances and consequences of them be well expended : else the Gratitude is like to be none, or very defective. For we commensurate our thankfulness, not so much to the intrinsic excellency of things, as to our peculiar estimations of them. A *Cynick*, perhaps, would not return more thanks for a diamond, then for a pebble ; nor more gratefully receive a talent of gold, then an ounce of copper : because he equally values, or rather alike contemns both.

Wherefore we find our (never-to-be-forgotten) example , the devout Thanksgiver *David*, continually declaring the great price he set upon the Divine favours ; admiring and displaying their transcendent perfections , their wonderfull greatness, their boundless extension , their excessive multitude , their endless duration, their advantageous circumstances, (the excellent needfulness, convenience, and seasonableness of them ; together with the admirable freeness, wisdom and power of the Benefactor shining forth in and by them.)

I will

I will praise thee, O Lord, (saith he) among the people, I will sing unto thee among the nations: For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds: and, Remember the marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth. He is the Lord our God, his judgments are in all the earth: and again, Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast. How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! and, How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O Lord! O how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number then the sand: and again, His work is honourable and glorious, his righteousness endureth for ever: and, The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works: and, Blessed be the Lord, who daily loaddeth us with his benefits.

Ps. 108. 3, 4.
Ps. 103. 5, 7.
Ps. 36. 5, 6, 7.
Ps. 139. 17, 18.
Psal. 111. 3.
Psal. 145. 9.
Psal. 68. 19.

In such manner ought we diligently to survey, and judiciously to estimate the effects of Divine beneficence, examining every part, and descanting upon every circumstance thereof: like those
that

that contemplate some rare beauty, or some excellent picture; some commending the exact proportions, some the gracefull features, some the lively colours discernible therein. There is not the least of the Divine favours, which, if we consider the condescensive tenderness, the clear intention, the undeserved frankness, the chearfull debonairity expressed therein, hath not dimensions larger then our comprehension, colours too fair, and lineaments too comely for our weak sight thoroughly to discern; requiring therefore our highest esteem, and our utmost thanks.

'Tis, perhaps, somewhat dangerous to affix a determinate value upon any of God's Benefits: (for to value them seems to undervalue them, they being really inestimable:) what then is it to extenuate, to vilifie, to despise the greatest? We should esteem them, as we measure the Heavens with our eye; as we compute the sands upon the shore, as we would prize inexhaustible mines of gold, and treasures of pearl; that is, by confessing heartily their worth surpasses the strength of our imagination to conceive, and of our speech to utter; that they are immense, innumerable, un-

con-

conceivable, and unexpressible. But still,

4. *Giving thanks* imports, that Benefits be received with a willing mind, a hearty sense, a vehement affection. The forementioned particulars are indeed necessary properties, inseparable concomitants, or prerequisite conditions to; but a chearfull and cordial acceptance of Benefits is the form (as it were) and soul, the life and spirit, the principal and most essential ingredient of this Duty.

It was not altogether unreasonable, though it went for a Paradox, that dictate of the *Stoicks*, That *animus sufficit animo*, and, That *qui libenter accepit, beneficium reddidit*: that he, who with a willing and well-affected mind receives a courtesie, hath fully discharged the duty of Gratitude; that other endeavours of return and compensation are rather handsome accessions to it, then indispensably requisite to the completion thereof. For as in the Collation, 'tis not the gold or the silver, the food or the apparel, in which the Benefit consists, but the will and benevolent intention of him that bestows them: so reciprocally 'tis the good acceptance, the sen-

sensibleness of, and acquiescence in the Benefactor's goodness, that constitutes the Gratitude; which who affords, though he be never capable of yielding other satisfaction, *voluntate voluntati satisfecit*; and, *Regum equavit opes animo*—. 'Tis ingenuity that constitutes (respectively) both a bountifull Giver, and a thankfull Receiver. A truly noble Benefactor purely aimeth at not any material reward, or advantage to himself; (it were trading this, not beneficence;) but the good, profit, and content of him to whom he dispenseth his favour: of which being assured, he rests satisfied, and accounts himself royally recompensed.

Quoties quod proposuit quis consequitur, capit operis sui fructum. Qui beneficium dat, quid proponit sibi? prodesse ei cui dat, & sibi voluptati esse: Non sibi invicem reddi voluit; aut non fuit beneficium, sed negotiatio. Beneficii proprium est, nihil de re-ditu cogitare. Senec.

Nec est dubium quin is qui liberalis benignisque dicitur, officium, non fructum, sequatur. Cic. de Leg. I.

Such a Benefactor is Almighty God, and such a tribute he requires of us; a ready embracement of, and a joyfull complacency in his kindness; even such as he expressed, who said, *Because thy loving-kindness is better then life, my lips shall praise thee*: and, *My soul shall be filled as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyfull lips*:

Psal. 63. 3.

Psal. 104. 33.

& 71. 22.

Psal. 63. 5.

lips : and, *I will praise thee with my whole heart ; I will be glad and joyce in thee : and, Bless the Lord, O my soul ; and all that is within me, praise his holy Name.* Psal. 9. 1, 2. Psal. 103. 1.

No Holocaust is so acceptable to God, as a Heart enflamed with the sense of his Goodness. He loves not onely ἰλαρὸν δότιν, (*a merry giver,*) but ἰλαρὸν δέκτιν, (*a chearfull receiver*) also. He would have us, as to desire his favour with a greedy appetite, so to tast it with a savoury relish. He designs not onely to fill our mouths with food, but *our hearts also with gladness.* Acts 14. 17.

We must not seem to grudge or repine, to murmur or disdain ; that we are necessitated to be beholden to him ; lest it happen to us as it did to them of whom 'tis said, *While the meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them.* Ps. 78. 30, 31. Yea, 'tis our duty, not to be contented onely, but to be delighted, to be transported, to be ravished with the emanations of his love : to entertain them with such a disposition of mind, as the dry and parched ground imbibes the soft dew and gentle showers ; as the chill and darksome air admits the benign influences

fluences of heavenly light ; as the thirsty soul takes in the sweet and cooling stream. He that with a fullen look, a dead heart, a faint sense, a cold hand, embraces the gifts of Heaven, is really unthankfull, though with deluges of wine and oil he makes the altars to o'reflow, and clouds the sky with the steam of his sacrifices. But yet farther,

5. This Duty requires due Acknowledgment of our obligation, significations of our notice, declarations of our esteem and good acceptance of favours conferr'd. 'Tis the worst and most detestable of ingratitude, that which proceeds from pride and scorn : and such is he guilty of, who is either unwilling, or ashamed to confess himself obliged ; who purposely dissembles a Benefit, or disavows the Benefactor ; who refuses

to render those most manifestly due, and most * easily discharged, those neither toilsome, nor expensive obligations of praise and acknowledgment. This part of our duty requires, that we offer

to God, not costly Hecatombs, but the calves onely of our lips, (as the Prophet

Hoseab

* Οὐδὲ γὰρ βαρὺ πᾶσι ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ἐπιζητεῖται παρ' ἡμῶν, ἀλλ' ἢ τὸ ὁμολογεῖν μέγαν τὰς ποσότητας ἐνεργασίας, καὶ τὰς ἐν τῷ τῶν αὐτῶν ἐν χερσίν ἀναφέρειν. Chrys. tom. I. pag. 54.

Hos. 14. 2.

Haseah speaks;) not the fruit of our lands, but *καρπὸν χειλέων* onely, (as the Apostle to the Hebrews styles it,) *the fruit of our lips,* * *confessing to his name:* Heb. 13. 15. * *ὁμολογῆ- των.* that we employ some few blasts of the breath he gave us, on the celebration of his goodness, and advancement of his repute. *I will praise the name of God* Psal. 69. 30, *with a song, and will magnifie him with* 31. *thanksgiving.* *This shall please the Lord better then an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs, saith David.*

And surely 'tis the least homage we in gratitude owe, and can pay to Almighty God, to avow our dependence upon and obligation to him for the good things we enjoy, to acknowledge that his favours do deserve thanks, to publish to the world our experience of his goodness, to proclaim solemnly with the voice of thanksgiving his most deserved praise; resembling him who abounds in such expressions as these: *I will sing of the mercies of the Lord* Psal. 89. 1. *for ever, with my mouth will I make known his faithfulness to all generations.* *I will* Psal. 26. 7. *publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all his wondrous works.* *I will* Psal. 145. 5. *speak of the glorious honour of thy Majesty, and of thy wondrous works.* *I have* Psal. 40. 10.

Vid. Psal. 66.
 5. O come
 hither, and
 behold the
 works of
 God, &c.

not hid thy righteousness in my heart, I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

Thus if a gratefull affection live in our hearts, it will respire through our mouths, and discover it self in the motion of our lips. There will be a conspiracy and faithfull correspondence between our mind, and our tongue: if the one be sensible, the other will not be silent; as if the spring works, the wheels will turn about, and the bell not fail to speak. Neither shall we content our selves in lonesome tunes, and private soliloquies, to whisper out the Divine praises; but shall loudly excite and provoke others to a melodious consonance with us. We shall, with the sweet Singer of *Israel*, cite and invoke Heaven and Earth; the celestial quire of Angels, the several estates and generations of Men, the numberless company of all the Creatures, to assist and joyn in consort with us, in celebrating the worthy deeds, and magnifying the glorious name of our most mighty Creator, of our most bountifull Benefactor.

Grati-

Gratitude is of a fruitfull and diffusive nature, of a free and communicative disposition, of an open and sociable temper: it will be imparting, discovering, and propagating it self; it affects light, company, and liberty; it cannot endure to be smothered in privacy and obscurity. Its best instrument therefore is Speech, that most natural, proper, and easie mean of conversation, of signifying our conceptions, of conveying, and, as it were, transfunding our thoughts and our passions into each other. This there-

Ψυχὴ γὰρ οἶμαι ψυχὴ ἢ
πνεῦμα πνεύματι σωματι-
στικῇ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ ἀπο-
στέλλεται, &c. Clem. Alexan.
Strom. I. pag. 270.

fore *glory of ours*, and best *organ* that Psal. 57. 8.
we have, (as the Psalmist seems to call it,) our Tongue, we should in all reason devote to the honour, and consecrate to the praise of him who made it, and who conserves it still in tune.

And the farther to provoke us, we may consider, that it hath been the manner, prompted by Nature, and authorized by general practice, for men of all nations, and all times, and all ways, by composed Hymns and panegyricall Elogies, to express their gratitude for the gifts of Nature, and for the Benefits indulged by Providence; in

their publick Sacrifices and solemn Festivities extolling the excellent qualities of their imaginary Deities; and reciting the famous atchievements of their Heroes, and supposed Benefactors: to whose favourable help and blessing, in their conceit, they owed the fruits of the earth, the comforts of life, the defence and patronage of their countries: being indeed mistaken in the object, but not transgressing in the substance of the Duty; paying a due debt, though to false creditours. And I wish we were as ready to imitate them in the one, as we are, perhaps, prone to blame them for the other. For, certainly, acknowledgments of the Divine Goodness, and solemn testifications of our thankfull sense thereof, (what-ever the abused world may now imagine,) was always, is now, and ever will be the principal and most noble part of all Religion immediately addressed to God. But moreover,

1 Sam. 12. 24.
*Onely fear the
 Lord, and
 serve him in
 truth with all
 your heart:
 for consider
 how great
 things he hath
 done for you.*

6. This Duty requires endeavours of real Compensation, and a satisfactory Requital of Benefits, according to the ability and opportunity of the receiver: that we do not onely verbally *dicere*, and *agnoscere*; but really *agere*, and

and *referre gratias*: that to him who hath by his beneficence obliged us, we minister reciprocal assistance, comfort and relief, if he need them, and be capable to receive them; however, by evident testimonies to discover our ready disposition to make such real returns; and withall, to fute our actions to his good liking, and in our carriage to comply with his reasonable desires.

For, as *the earth, which drinketh the* Heb. 6. 7, 8. *rain often coming upon it, and having been by great labour tilled, and manured with expence, yieldeth yet no* * *meet* ^{εὐδαμον βο- τάνην.} *herbage, or fruit agreeable to the expectation of him that dresseth it, but is either wholly barren, or produceth onely thorns and briars, is (as the Apostle to the Hebrews tells us) to be reprobated, and nigh unto cursing; that is, deserves no farther care or culture to be employed on it, and is to be reputed desperately worthless: so is he, (that we may apply an* *Apodosis* *to the Apostle's comparison) who, daily partaking the influences of Divine Providence and Bounty, affords no answerable return, to be accounted execrably unthankfull, and unworthy of any farther favour to be shewed toward him.*

Psal. 16. 2.

'Tis true, our *righteousness* (or *beneficence*, so the word there signifies) *doth not extend unto God* : His Benefits exceed all possibility of any proportionable requitall : He doth not need, nor can ever immediately receive any advantage from us : we cannot enrich him with our gifts, who by unquestionable right, and in unalterable possession, is Lord and Master of all things that do actually, or can possibly exist ; nor advance him by our weak commendations, who already enjoyeth the supreme pitch of glory ; nor any-way contribute to his in it self compleat and indefectible Beatitude. Yet we may by apposite significations declare our willingness to serve and exalt him : we may by our obsequious demeanour highly please and content him : we may, by our charity and benignity to those whose good he tenders, yield (though not an adequate, yet) an acceptable return to his Benefits. *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits ?* saith David, in way of counsell and deliberation : and thereupon resolves, *I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord : I will pay my vows unto the Lord.* Seasonable benedictions, officious

Psal. 116. 12.

Vers. 13, 14.

officious addressees, and faithfull performances of vows, he intimates to bear some shadow at least, some resemblance of compensation. And so did his wife Son likewise, when he thus advised, *Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of thy encrease.* Prov. 3. 9.

Almighty God, though he really doth, and cannot otherwise doe, yet will not seem to bestow his favours altogether gratis, but to expect some competent return, some small use and income from them. He will assert his rightfull title, and be acknowledged the chief proprietary by signal expressions of our fealty, and the payment of some, though inconsiderable, quit-rent, for our possessions derived from him: he will rather himself be seemingly indigent, then permit us to be really ingratefull. For, knowing well that our performance of duty and respect toward him greatly conduceth to our comfort and happiness, he requireth of us such demonstrations of them, as we conveniently are able to exhibit; he appoints services expressive of thankfulness, exacts tributes and customs, demands loans and benevolences, encourages and accepts free-will-offerings from us. *Thou shalt* Exod. 23. 15.
not

Ακίρως
καὶ αὐτὸς ἡ
σὶα καὶ ἀνεν-
δεῖς ὡς, ὡ-
δενδς ἑτέρῃ
προσδοτῶ·
οἱ δὲ αἰνῶντες
αὐτῶν, αὐτοὶ
λαμπρότεροι
γίνονται.
S. Chryl. in
Psal. 144.
pag. 885.
Savil.

not appear empty before the Lord, was a Statute to the Jews, qualified and moderated by certain measures : The First-fruits of their Lands, the First-born of their Cattel and of themselves, the Tenths of their annual encrease, and a certain allotment from the Spoils acquired in wars, did God challenge to himself, as fitting recompences due for his bounty to and care over them.

Neither did the Gentiles conceive themselves exempted from the like obligation. For the ἀροθρία, the top or chief of their Corn-heaps, they were wont to consecrate unto him who had blessed their fields with encrease ; and the ἀρορία, the first and best of the prey, they dedicated to the adornment of his temple by whose favourable disposal they had obtained the victory. Neither would they sooner begin their meal, and partake of their necessary refreshment, then, by pouring forth their gratulatory libation, they had performed some homage to Heaven for it.

Hom. Il. η'.
ad finem.

——— ἐδὲ τις ἔτλη

Πρὶν πίνειν, πρὶν λείψαι ἑσθμενέι Κρονίων, was the custom, it seems, in Homer's time. I shall not insist upon their ἀναθήματα, their anniversary or their casual

suall Sacrifices; but onely observe,
(what, if seasonable, might by many
sufficient testimonies be evinced,) that
those men (at least the most intelligent
of them) were not so senseless as to
imagine, that the Gods to whom they
performed those services, and devoted
those oblations, did any-wise need, or
were truly benefited by them; but that
they esteemed it a comely thing, by the
most significant means they could in-
vent, to declare their gratefull sense of
the Divine goodness and indulgence to-
ward them.

Vid. Platonis
Alcib. II.
pag. 459.
Οὐ γὰρ οἶμαι,
περὶ τὸν ὅτι τὸ
ἦν θεῶν, ὥστε
ὑπὸ δούλων
ἀνθρώπων,
οἷον κακὸν
τοῦ σώματος, &c.

And though we are, perhaps, disobligh-
ed now from the circumstantial man-
ner, yet are we no-wise freed from
(but rather more strongly engaged to)
the substantial performance of this sort
of Gratitude. We are to offer still,
not dead *bulls and goats*, but (as S. Paul
saith) *our own bodies, living sacrifices*, Rom. 12. 1.
holy and acceptable to God. We are ex-
cused from materiall, but are yet bound
to yield *πνευμαλὺς θυσίας*, *spiritual* 1 Pet. 2. 5.
sacrifices unto God, as S. Peter tells us.
We must burn incense still, that of fer-
vent Devotion; and send up conti-
nually to Heaven *θυσίαν τῆς αἰνέσεως*,
that *thank-offering of praise*, which the Heb. 13. 15.
Apostle

Apostle to the *Hebrews* mentions. We must consecrate the first-born of our Souls, (pure and holy Thoughts,) and the first-fruits of our strength, (our most active Endeavours,) to God's Service. We must slay our impure desires, mortifie our corrupt affections, and abandon our selfish respects for his sake. We must give him our hearts, and present our wills entirely to his disposal. We must vow to him, and pay the daily oblation of sincere Obedience. We must officiously attend his pleasure, and labour to content him by an innocent and unblemished conversation. With these things Almighty God is effectually gratified; he approves of and accepts these, as real testimonies of our Thankfulness, and competent returns for his Benefits.

Μία ἀμοιβὴ
 κλειωτάτη
 ὡς ἀνδρά-
 των, ταῦτα
 δὲ ἀν' αὐτῶν
 ἀρετὰ τὰ
 Θεῷ. Clem.
 Alex. Strom.
 7. p. 511.

Especially our Charity and Beneficence, our exhibiting love and respect to good men, (his faithfull servants and near relations,) our affording help and succour to persons in need and distress, he accounts a suitable retaliation of his kindness, acknowledges to be an obligation laid upon himself, and hath by settled rules and indispensable promises obliged himself to requite them. For,
 He

He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth Prov. 19. 17.
unto the Lord; and that which he hath
given, he will pay him again: and, God Heb. 6. 10.
is not unrighteous, to forget your work,
and labour of love, which ye have shewed
toward his Name, in that ye have mini-
stered to the Saints, and do minister:
and, To doe good and communicate, forget Heb. 13. 16.
not; for with such sacrifices God is well
pleased: and, I desire fruit (saith S. Paul Phil. 4. 17, 18.
to the Philippians) that may abound
to your account. But I have all, and a-
bound; I am full, having received of E-
paphroditus the things which were sent
from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a
sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.
And, Inasmuch as ye have done it to (that Matt. 25. 40.
is, fed, and cloathed, and comforted)
the least of these my brethren, ye have
done it unto me, saith our Saviour; ma-
nifestly declaring, that the good we doe,
and the respect we shew unto good, and
needy men, God reckons it done unto
himself.

And this point I shall conclude with
the sayings of the wise Hebrew Philoso-
pher Ben-Sirach, He that keepeth the Eccles 35. 1, 2, 3.
Law, bringeth offerings enough: he that
taketh heed to the Commandment, offereth
a peace-offering. He that requiteth a good
turn,

turn, offereth fine flower : and he that giveth alms , sacrificeth praise. To depart from wickedness, is a thing pleasing to the Lord: and to forsake unrighteousness, is a propitiation. To these I shall onely adde this one particular,

7. That true Gratitude for Benefits is always attended with the Esteem, Veneration, and Love of the Benefactor. Beneficence is a Royal and God-like thing , an argument of eminent Goodness and Power conspiring ; and necessarily therefore , as in them that perceive , and duly consider it , it begets Respect and Reverence, so peculiarly in those that feel its benign influence, it produces Love and Affection : like the heavenly Light, which to all that behold it appears glorious ; but more powerfully warms those that are directly subject to its rays , and is by them more vigorously reflected.

And as to those that are immediately concerned therein, it imports more particular Regard and Good will ; so, if they be duly sensible thereof, it engages them, in mutual correspondence, to an extraordinary Esteem and Benevolence: such as *David* upon this account professes to have been in himself toward God,

God, and frequently excites others to.
I will love thee, O Lord my strength. Pfal. 18. 1.
I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy Verse 3.
to be praised. The Lord liveth, and blef- Verse 46.
sed be my rock; and let the God of my
salvation be exalted. I love the Lord, be- Pfal. 116. 1.
cause he hath heard my voice, and my sup-
plications. And, (in the Gospel) Because Luk. 7. 47.
her sins, being many, were forgiven, there-
fore she loved much. So true it is, that
sense of favour indulged is naturally
productive of love.

*Ἐστὶν χάρις
 ἡ δὲ ἡ χάρις
 τῆς ἀγάπης
 ὁμοία.*
 Soph.

Thus have I plainly and simply presented you with what my meditations suggested concerning the Nature and Substance of this Duty, with the several branches sprouting from the main stock thereof: I proceed now to that which will exceedingly enlarge the worth, and engage to the performance thereof.

II. The Object and Term to which it is to be directed; we are to give thanks to God. To God, I say; that is, to Him unto whom we are obliged, not for some small and inconsiderable trifles, but for the most weighty and valuable Benefits: from whom we receive, not few or some, but all good things; whatever

ever is necessary for our sustenance, convenient for our use, pleasant for our enjoyment; not onely those that come immediately from his hand, but what we obtain from others, who from him receive both the will and the power, the means and the opportunities of doing us good: to whom we owe, not onely what we ever did, or do at present possess, or can hereafter hope for of good; but that we were, are, or shall ever be in capacity to receive any: to the authour, upholder and preserver of our being; without whose goodness we had never been, and without whose care we cannot subsist one moment.

To Him who is the Lord and true owner of all things we partake of; whose air we breathe, whose ground we tread on, whose food sustains us; whose wholly we are our selves, both the Bodies we carry about us, (which is *the work of his hands*,) and the Soul we think with, which was breathed from his mouth.

To Him who hath created a whole World to serve us, a spacious, a beautifull, a stately World for us to inhabit, and to disport in: who hath subjected
so

so fair a territory to our dominion, and
consigned to our use so numerous a pro-
geny of goodly creatures ; to be mana-
ged, to be governed, to be enjoyed
by us.

So that where-ever we direct our
eyes, whether we reflect them inwards
upon our selves, we behold his Good-
ness to occupy and penetrate the very
root and centre of our beings ; or ex-
tend them abroad toward the things
about us, we may perceive our selves
enclosed wholly, and surrounded with
his Benefits. At home we find a come-
ly Body framed by his curious artifice,
various Organs fitly proportioned, situ-
ated, and tempered for strength, orna-
ment, and motion, actuated by a gentle
heat, and invigorated with lively spi-
rits, disposed to health, and qualified
for a long endurance ; subservient to a
Soul endued with divers Senses, Facul-
ties and Powers, apt to enquire after,
pursue and perceive various delights
and contents. To the satisfaction of
which all extrinsecal things do minister
matter and help ; by his kind disposal,
who furnishes our Palats with variety
of delicious fare, entertains our Eyes
with pleasant spectacles, ravishes our
V Ears

Ears with harmonious sounds, perfumes our Nostrils with fragrant odours, cheers our Spirits with comfortable gales, *fills our Hearts with food and gladness*, supplies our manifold needs, and protects us from innumerable dangers.

To Him who hath inspired us with immortal Minds, and impressed upon them perspicuous characters of his own Divine Essence; hath made us, not in some superficial lineaments, but in our most intimate constitution, to resemble Himself, and to partake of his most excellent Perfections; an extensive Knowledge of truth, a vehement Complacency in good, a forward Capacity of being compleatly happy, (according to our degree, and within our sphere.) *To which blessed End* by all suitable means (of external ministry and interior assistance) he faithfully conducts us; revealing to us the way, urging us in our process, reclaiming us when we deviate; engaging us by his Commands, soliciting us by gentle Advices, encouraging us by gracious Promises; instructing us by his holy Word, and admonishing us by his loving Spirit.

To Him who vouchsafes to grant us a free access unto, a constant intercourse
and

and a familiar acquaintance with Himself; to esteem and style us his *Friends* and *Children*; to invite us frequently, and entertain us kindly with those most pleasant delicacies of spiritual repast; yea, to visit us often at our home, and (if we admit) to abide and dwell with us; indulging us the enjoyment of that Presence, wherein the life of all joy and comfort consists, and to behold the light of his all-chearing countenance.

Is there any thing more? Yes: *To Him* who, to redeem us from Misery, and to advance our estate, hath infinitely debased Himself, and eclipsed the brightness of his glorious Majesty; not disdaining to assume us into a near affinity, yea, into a perfect union with himself; to inhabit our frail and mortal nature, to undergoe the laws and conditions of Humanity, to appear in our shape, and converse, as it were, upon equal terms with us, and at last to tast the bitter Cup of a most painfull and disgracefull Death for us.

Yea, *To Him* who not onely descended from his Imperial Throne, became a Subject, and (which is more) a Servant for our sake; but designed thereby to exalt us to a participation of his royal

dignity, his Divine nature, his eternal glory and bliss; submitting Crowns and Sceptres to our choice; Crowns that cannot fade, and Sceptres that can never be extorted from us.

Farther yet, *To Him*, the excellent quality, the noble end, the most obliging manner of whose Beneficence doth surpass the matter thereof, and hugely augment the Benefits: who, not compelled by any necessity, not obliged by any law, (or previous compact,) not induced by any extrinſick arguments, not inclined by our merits, not wearied with our importunities, not instigated by troublesome passions of pity, shame, or fear, (as we are wont to be,) not flattered with promises of recompence, nor bribed with expectation of emolument thence to accrue unto himself; but being absolute Master of his own actions, onely both Law-giver and Counsellour to himself, all-sufficient, and incapable of admitting any accession to his perfect blissfulness; most willingly and freely, out of pure bounty and good will, is our friend and benefactor; preventing not onely our desires, but our knowledge; surpassing not our deserts onely, but our wishes, yea, even
our

our conceits, in the dispensation of his inestimable and unrequitable benefits; having no other drift in the collation of them, beside our real good and welfare, our profit and advantage, our pleasure and content.

To Him who not lately began, or suddenly will cease, that is either uncertain or mutable in his intentions, but from everlasting designed, continues daily, and will (if we suffer him) to all eternity persevere unmovable in his resolutions to doe us good.

To Him whom no Ingratitude, no undutifull carriage, no rebellious disobedience of ours could for one minute wholly remove, or divert from his steddypurpose of caring for us: who regards us, though we do not attend to him; procures our welfare, though we neglect his concernments; employs his restless thought, extends his watchfull eye, exerts his powerfull arm, is always mindfull, and always busy to doe us good; watching over us, when we sleep, and remembring us, when we forget our selves: in whom yet 'tis infinite condescension to think of us, who are placed so far beneath his thoughts; to value us, who are but dust, and dirt;

not to despise and hate us, who are really so despicable and unworthy. For, *Pl. 113. 5, 6. though he dwelleth on high, (saith the Psalmist truly and emphatically,) he humbleth himself to behold the things that are done in heaven and earth.*

To Him that is as mercifull and gracious, as liberal and munificent toward us: that not onely bestows on us more gifts, but pardons us more debts, and forgives us more sins, then we live minutes: that with infinite patience endures, not onely our manifold infirmities and imperfections, but our petulant follies, our obstinate perversenesses, our treacherous infidelities; overlooks our careless neglects, and our wilfull miscarriages; puts up the exceedingly-many outrageous affronts, injuries, and contumelies continually offered to his Supreme Majesty by us base worms, whom he hath always under his feet, and can crush to nothing at his pleasure.

Jam. 1. 5.

To Him yet who (as *S. James* saith) *giveth freely, and upbraideth no man:* who calls us neither very frequently, nor over-strictly to accounts: who exacts of us no impossible, no very difficult, no greatly-burthenſome, or costly returns; being satisfied with the
cheer.

cheerfull acceptance of his favours, the hearty acknowledgments of his goodness, the sincere performance of such duties to which our own welfare, comfort and advantage (rightly apprehended) would otherwise abundantly dispose us.

To Him, lastly, whose Benefits to acknowledge is the greatest benefit of all; to be enabled to thank whom deserves our greatest thanks ; to be sensible of whose Beneficence, to meditate on whose Goodness, to admire whose Excellency, to celebrate whose Praise, is Heaven it self and Paradise , the life of Angels, the quintessence of joy, the supreme degree of Felicity.

In a word, *To Him* whose Benefits are immensely great, innumerably many, unexpressibly good and precious. For, *Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord ? who can shew forth all his praise ?* Psal. 106. 2. said he , who had employed often his most active thoughts, and his utmost endeavours thereupon, and was incomparably better able to doe it.

To this God , to this great , to this onely Benefactor of ours, we owe this most natural and easie, this most just and equal, this most sweet and pleasant Du-

ty of giving Thanks. To whom if we wilfully refuse, if we carelessly neglect to pay it, I shall onely say thus much, that we are not onely monstrously ingratefull, and horribly wicked; but abominably foolish, and deplorably miserable. I shall repeat this sentence once again, and wish it may have its due effect upon us: To this great, to this onely Patron and Benefactour of ours, if we do not in some measure discharge our due debt of Gratitude, for his inestimable Benefits and Mercies, we are to be adjudged not onely most prodigiously unthankfull, most detestably impious; but most wofully stupid also and senseless, most desperately wretched and unhappy.

I should now proceed to consider the Circumstance of Time, determined in the word *Always*; and the Extension of the Matter, implied in those words, *for all things*: and then to subjoyn some farther inducements, or arguments persuasive to the practice of this Duty. But the time (and, I fear, your patience,) failing, I shall reserve them to some other opportunity.



The Ninth Sermon.

EPHES. 5. 20.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God.

HAVING formerly discoursed upon these words, I observed in them Four Particulars considerable :
 1. the substance of a Duty, to which we are exhorted, to *give thanks* ; 2. the Term unto which it is directed, *to God* ;
 3. the Circumstance of Time, determined in that word, *always* ; 4. the Extent of the Matter about which the Duty is employed, *for all things*. Concerning the Two former Particulars, wherein the Duty consisted, and wherefore especially related unto God , I then represented what did occur to my meditation.

III. I proceed now to the Third, the Circumstance of Time allotted to the performance of this Duty, expressed by
 that

that universal and unlimited term, *Always*.

Which yet is not so to be understood, as if thereby we were obliged in every instant (or singular point of time) actually to remember, to consider, to be affected with, and to acknowledge the Divine Benefits : for the deliberate operations of our minds being sometimes wholly interrupted by sleep, otherwhile preoccupied by the indispensable care of serving our natural necessities, (and with attendance upon other reasonable employments,) it were impossible to comply with an obligation to the performance of this Duty so interpreted. And those Maxims of Law, *Impossibilem nulla est obligatio*, and, *Quæ rerum naturâ prohibentur, nullâ lege confirmata sunt*, (that is, *No law or precept can oblige to impossibilities*,) being evidently grounded upon natural equity, seem yet more valid in relation to his Laws, who is the Judge of all the world, and in his dispensations most transcendently just and equal.

We may therefore observe, that the *Hebrews* are wont (in way of *Synecdoche*, or grammatical *Hyperbole*) so to use words of this kind, that their universal importance ought to be restrained

ned by the quality or circumstances of the matter about which they converse.

As when our Saviour saith, *Ye shall be hated by all men for my sake*; *All* is not

Matt. 10. 22.

to be taken for every singular person, (since there were some that loved our Saviour, and embraced the Evangelical Doctrine,) but for many, or the most.

And when *David* saith, *There is none that doeth good*; he seemeth onely to mean,

Psal. 14. 1.

that in the general corruption of his times there were few righteous persons to be found. And so *for ever* is often used, not for a perpetual and endless, but for a long and lasting duration; and *always*, not for a continual (unintermitted) state of being, or action, but for such a perseverance as agrees to the condition of the thing to which it is applied.

'Tis (for instance) prescribed in *Exodus*, that *Aaron* should bear the judgment

Exod. 28. 30.

of the children of *Israel* (the *Urim* and *Thummim*) upon his heart before the Lord continually; that is, (not in absolute and rigorous acception continually, but) constantly ever when he went into the Holy place to discharge the Pontifical function, as the context declares. And

our Saviour in the Gospel saith of himself, *Εγὼ πάντοτε ἐδίδαξα*, *I always taught*

Joh. 18. 20.

in

in the temple; that is, very often, and ever when fit occasion was presented. And the Apostles, immediately after *Christ's* ascension, ἡσαν διαπαντός ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, were (as *S. Luke* tells us) *continually in the temple, praising and blessing God*; that is, they resorted thither constantly at the usual times, or canonical hours of prayer. In like manner those injunctions (of nearest affinity) of *rejoicing, of giving thanks always, and particularly of praying without ceasing*, (as I have shewn more largely in another Discourse,) are to be taken in a sense so qualified, that the observance of them may be at least morally possible.

1 Thess. 5.
16, 18.

Eph. 6. 18.

Luke 18. 1.

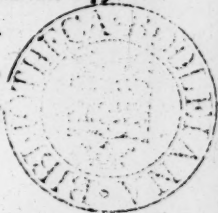
1 Thess. 5.
17.

Thus far warrantably we may limit the extension, and mollifie the rigour of this seemingly-boundless term: but we can hardly allow any farther restriction, without destroying the natural signification, or diminishing the due emphasis thereof. As far therefore as 'tis possible for us, we must endeavour always to perform this duty of Gratitude to Almighty God: and consequently,

1. Hereby is required a Frequent performance thereof; that we do often actually meditate upon, be sensible of,
con-

confess and celebrate the Divine Beneficence. For what is done but seldom or never, (as we commonly say) cannot be understood done always, without a *Catachresis*, or abuse of words too enormous. As therefore no moment of our life wants sufficient matter, and every considerable portion of time ministers notable occasion of blessing God; as he allows himself no spacious intervals or discontinuances of doing us good: so ought we not to suffer any of those many days (vouchsafed by his goodness) to flow beside us, void of the signall expressions of our dutifull Thankfulness to him; nor to admit in our course of life any long vacations from this Duty. If God incessantly, and through every minute, demonstrates himself gracious unto us; we in all reason are obliged frequently and daily to declare our selves gratefull unto him.

So at least did *David*, (that most eminent example in this kind, and therefore most apposite to illustrate our Doctrine, and to enforce the practice thereof;) for, *Every day*, saith he, *I will* Psal. 145. 2. *bless thee; I will praise thy Name for ever and ever. Every day.* The Heavenly



venly bodies did not more constantly observe their course, then he his diurnal revolutions of praise : Every day in his Kalendar was as it were Festivall, and consecrated to Thanksgiving. Neither did he adjudge it sufficient to devote some small parcells of each day to

Psal. 35. 28. this service : for, *My tongue (saith he) shall speak of thy righteousness, and of thy praise all the day long :* and again,

Psal. 71. 8, 15, 24. *My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness, and thy salvation all the day, for I know not the numbers thereof.* The Be-

nefits of God he apprehended so great, and numerous, that no definite space of time would serve to consider and commemorate them. He resolves therefore

Psal. 146. 2. & 104. 33. *upon that employment : While I live, I will praise the Lord ; I will sing praises unto my God, while I have any being :*

Psal. 34. 1. & Psal. 71. 6. *and, I will bless the Lord at all times ; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.*

No man can reasonably pretend greater impediments, or oftner avo-

cations from the practice of this duty, then he, upon whom the burthen of a royal estate, and the care of governing a populous nati-

on

Εἰ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἀνὴρ
μυρίασι βασιλεύοντος προ-
τίη, καὶ παιδαρχῶν περιε-
κρίτων, τοσαύτας παρεχέ-
λει τὸ Θεῶν· τίνα ἀνέχομεθα
ἐπιορῶν ἢ συγνώμην ἡ-
μῶν, πικρῶν ἡδονῶν

on were incumbent : yet
 could not they thrust out of
 his memory, nor extinguish
 in his heart the lively sense of Divine
 goodness ; which (notwithstanding the
 company of other secular encumbran-
 ces) was always present to his mind ,
 and, like a spirit, (excluded from no
 place by any corporeall resistance,) did
 mingle with and penetrate all his
 thoughts, and affections, and actions.
 So that he seems to have approached
 very near to the compleat performance
 of this Duty, according to the extremi-
 ty of a literal interpretation ; and to
 have been always without any inter-
 mission employed in giving thanks to
 God. The consideration (methinks)
 of so noble a pattern, adjoyned to the
 evident reasonableness of the Duty,
 should engage us to the frequent prac-
 tice thereof.

τες, ἢ μὴ συνεχῶς αὐτοῖς
 ἰνατεύοντες ; &c. Chrys.
 Tom. V. pag. 76.

But if the consideration of this ex-
 cellent example do not, yet certainly
 that may both provoke us to emulation,
 and confound us with shame, of *Epic-
 tetus*, a Heathen man, whose words to
 this purpose seem very remarkable :
 Εἰ γὰρ οὐκ εἶχομεν, (saith he in *Arrian's* Lib. I cap. 17.
Differt.) ἀλλο πῶς εἶδε ἡμᾶς ποιεῖν, καὶ
 κοινῇ,

κοινῇ, καὶ ἰδίᾳ, ἢ ὑμνεῖν τὸ θεῖον, καὶ εὐφημεῖν,
καὶ ἐπεξέρεχθαι τὰς χάριτας; ἢ ἔδει καὶ
σκάπτοντας, καὶ ἀρῶντας, καὶ ἐδόντας ᾄδειν
τὸ ὕμνον τὸ εἰς τὸ θεῖον; Μεγας ὁ θεός, &c.
that is, in our language, If we under-
stood our selves, what other thing should

we doe, either publicly, or
privately, then sing Hymns
to, and speak well of God,
and perform Thanks unto
him? Ought we not, when
we were digging, or plowing,
or eating, to sing a (futable)
Hymn to him? Great is
God, in that he hath bestow-

ed on us those instruments wherewith we
till the ground: Great is God, because he
hath given us hands, a throat, a belly;
that we grow insensibly, that sleeping we
breathe. Thus (proceeds he) should we
upon every occurrence celebrate God, and
superadde of all the most excellent and
most Divine Hymn, for that he hath gi-
ven us the faculty of apprehending and
using these things orderly. Wherefore
since most men are blind and ignorant of
this, should not there be some one, who
should discharge this office, and who
should for the rest utter this Hymn to
God? And what can I, a lame (and
decrepit)

Πάντα πίνω τὸν βίον
ἐν τῷ ἄρῳ, παντὶ πάν-
τῳ τὸν παρῆναι τὸ θεῖον πε-
πειτμένον, γεωργῶν ἀ-
ρῶντες, πλέων ὑμνῶντες,
καὶ τὴν πᾶν ἀλλὰ πολιτεῖαν
ἐν τῇ χῶρᾳ ἀνασπρόμεθα.
Clem. Alex. Strom. VII.
p. 517.

decrepit) old man doe else, then celebrate God? Were I indeed a Nightingale, I would doe what belongs to a Nightingale; if a Swan, what becomes a Swan: but since now I am endued with Reason, I ought to praise God. This is my duty and concernment, and so I doe; neither will I desert this employment, while it is in my power: and to the same song I exhort you all. Thus that worthy Philosopher, not instructing us onely, and exhorting with pathetical discourse, but by his practice inciting us to be continually expressing our Gratitude to God.

And although neither the admonition of Prophets, nor precepts of Philosophers, nor the examples of both, should prevail; yet the precedents (methinks) of dumb and senseless creatures should animate us thereto; which never cease to obey the law imposed on them by their Maker, and without intermission glorifie him. For, *The Heavens declare* Psal. 19. 1, *the glory of God, and the Firmament* 2, 3. *sheweth his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and Night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.* 'Tis S. Chrysostom's argumentation. *Καὶ ὃ ἀίχρον ἂν εἴη, φαίη ἡ, ἡ* In Psal. 144.
X λογικόν

λογικὸν ἀνθρώπου, καὶ τῶν ἐρωμένων ἀ-
 πάλων τιμωτερον, ἑλαττον τῇ κλίσεως φέρεται
 κατὰ τὴν εὐφημίας λόγον· ἐκ αἰχρῶν ὁ
 μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄτοπον, &c. *Twere an
 ugly thing, that Man, endued with Rea-
 son, and the most honourable of all things
 visible, should in rendring thanks and
 praise be exceeded by other creatures;
 neither is it onely base, but absurd. For
 how can it be otherwise, since other crea-
 tures every day and every hour send up a
 doxology to their Lord and Maker? For,
 The Heavens declare the glory of
 God, &c.*

If the busie Heavens are always at
 leisure, and the stupid Earth is perpet-
 ually active in manifesting the wisdom,
 power, and goodness of their Creatour;
 how shamefull is it, that we (the flower
 of his creation, the most obliged, and
 most capable of doing it) should com-
 monly be either too busie, or too idle
 to doe it; should seldom or never be
 disposed to contribute our endeavours
 to the advancement of his glory?
 But,

2. *Giving thanks always* may import
 our Appointing, and punctually Obser-
 ving certain convenient times of per-
 forming this Duty; that is, of serious
 medita-

meditation upon, and affectionate acknowledgment of the Divine Bounty. We know that all persons, who design with advantage to prosecute an orderly course of action, and would not lead a tumultuary life, are wont to distinguish their portions of time, assigning some to the necessary refectations of their body, others to the divertisement of their minds, and a great part to the dispatch of their ordinary business: otherwise (like S. James his *double-minded man*) they would be *unstable in all their ways*; they would ever fluctuate in their resolutions, and be uncertain when, and how, and to what they should apply themselves. And so, this main concernment of ours, this most excellent part of our duty, if we do not depute some vacant seasons for it, and observe some periodical recourses thereof, we shall be tempted often to omit it; we shall be listless to doe it, apt to defer it, and easily diverted from it by the encroachments of other less-behovving affairs.

The *Jews*, to preserve them in the constant exercise of this Duty, had instituted by God a sacrifice called *תמיד* DAID. 3. 11. (*Juge,*) rendred by the *Greek* Transla-

tours ἡ διαπαντός Δουσία, *the continual sacrifice*; to which the divine Authour of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* seems to allude, when in these words he exhorts: Δὲ αὐτῷ ἐν ἀναρέσμεν Δουσίαν αἰ-
 Heb. 13. 15. νέως διαπαντός τῷ Θεῷ. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, (or the continuall sacrifice of praise,) the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his Name.* As that sacrifice therefore, being offered constantly at a set time, was thence denominated *continuall*; so perhaps may we, by constantly observing some fit returns of praise and thanksgiving, be said *always to give thanks.*

In determining the seasons and proportions of which, what other rule or standard can we better conform to, than that of the Royal Prophet? I shall not urge his example so much; (according to which we should be obliged to a greater frequency;) for, *Seven times a day* (saith he) *do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments*: but rather allege his general direction and opinion,
 Psal. 119. 64. proposed to us in those words of his; *It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy Name, O thou Most high; to shew forth thy lov-*
 ing-

ving-kindness every morning, and thy Psal. 55. 17.
faithfulness every night. It is a good
thing; that is, a seemly, a convenient,
a commendable, a due performance:
every morning; that is, when our spirits,
being recreated with sleep, are become
more vigorous, our memories more fresh,
our fancies more quick, and active: to
show forth thy loving-kindness; that is,
from a hearty sense of our obligation,
to acknowledge the free bounty of him,
who, in pursuance of his former kind-
ness, hath been pleased to accumulate
new favours on us; to guard us by his
watchfull care, when we were buried,
as it were, in a senseless ignorance, and
total neglect of our own welfare; to
raise us from that temporary death, and
to confer a new life upon us, restoring
us to our health, to our means of sub-
sistence, to all the necessary supports,
and the desirable comforts of life: every
night also; that is, when our spirits are
exhausted with action, and our minds
tired with thoughtfulness; when we
are become weary, not of doing onely,
but almost of being; we should con-
clude our toils, and wrap up our cares
in the sweet sense, and gratefull memo-
ry of his goodness, who hath protected

us so many hours from the manifold dangers, and more sins, to which by our weakness, and our folly, and our bad inclinations, we are through every minute exposed ; and withall hath provided us so easie, and so delightfull a means of recovering our spent activity, of repairing our decayed strength.

Psal. 65. 8.

Thus if we constantly begin, and thus close up, thus bound and circumscribe our days, dedicating those most remarkable periods of time to blessing God, and *making* (as the Psalmist speaks) *the out-goings of the morning and evening to rejoyce in him* ; (since beginning and ending do in a manner comprehend the whole ; and the morning and evening, in *Moses* his computation and style, do constitute a day ;) we may (not incongruously) be supposed and said to *give thanks always*. But yet farther, this may import,

3. A Vigilant attendence upon this Duty, such as men bestow on their employments, whereof though the actual prosecution ceases, yet the design continuedly proceeds. As we say, such a one is writing a book, building a house, occupying a piece of land, though he be at that present peradventure sleeping,

ping, or eating, or satisfying some other desire ; because his design never sleeps, and his purpose persists uninterrupted. And thus it seems we are to understand our Saviour, and the Apostles, when they exhort us προσκατεσθῆναι, to continue Rom. 12. 12. instant in prayer, and thanksgiving ; and ἀγρυπνεῖν ἐν πάντῃ προσκατεσθῆσαι, to watch with all perseverance ; and γεννοεσθῆναι, to make in thanksgiving ; and μὴ παύεσθαι, not to give over giving thanks : Eph. 1. 16. and, to perform these duties ἀδιαλείπτως, incessantly, or without giving off ; 1 Thess. 5. 17. μὴ ἐκκακεῖν, not to grow worse, faint, or fainter : Luk. 18. 1. (which is, in that place, made equivalent to, and explicatory of doing duty always.) Which expressions denote a most diligent attendance on these Duties : that we make them not a παράγωγον, a diversion or by-business of our lives, allowing onely a perfunctory and desultorious endeavour on them ; but esteem them a weighty business, to be pursued with stedfast resolution, and unwearied industry.

As our beings and powers did proceed from the Goodness, so the results of them naturally tend to the Glory of God ; and the deliberations of our Will ought to conspire with the in-

stincts of our Nature : it should be the principall design which our intention should aim at, and our endeavour always drive on, to glorifie our Maker. Which doing, we may be reputed to discharge this Duty, and in some sense said *always* to give thanks. But farther,

4. This term [*always*] doth necessarily imply a Ready disposition, or habitual inclination to give Thanks, ever
 psal. 108. 1. permanent in us : that our *Hearts*, as *David's* was, be *fixed* always (that is, fittingly prepared, and steddily resolved) to thank and *praise* God : that our Affections be like tinder, though not always inflamed, yet easily inflammable by the sense of his Goodness.

'Tis said of the righteous man, that
 psal. 37. 26. *he is ever mercifull, and lendeth* : not for that he doth ever actually dispense alms, or furnish his poor neighbour with supplies ; but because his mind is ever inclinable to doe it, when need requires. So a gratefull man doth *always give thanks*, by being disposed to doe it upon all fit occasions. 'Tis the habit that qualifies and denominates a man such or such in any kind or degree of morality. A good man is in Scripture frequently

quently compared to a *Tree bringing forth fruit in due season*; and the root thereof is this habitual disposition, which being nourished by the dew of heaven, and quickned by the benign influence of Divine grace, sprouts forth opportunely, and yields a plentiful encrease of good fruit. Though we cannot always sing, our organs may be always rightly tuned for praise; at least they should never be unstrung, (and wholly out of kelter.)

We should maintain in our selves a constant good temper of mind, that no opportunity surprise, and find us unprepared to entertain worthily the effects of Divine favour: otherwise we shall as well lose the benefit, as God the thanks and glory due to them. That we be always thus disposed, is not impossible, and therefore requisite. But moreover,

5. Lastly, *Giving thanks always* imports, that we Readily embrace every opportunity of actually expressing our Thankfulness. For so, what in some places of Scripture is enjoined to be done *continually*, and *without ceasing*, is in others only required to be done upon all opportunities. Which shews, that *πάντοτε*
is

is to be expounded, not so much *ἐν παντὶ χρόνῳ*, at all times, as *ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ*, in every season. So *πρὸς καθένα πνεῦμα*, Ephes. 6. 18. *voι ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ ἐν πνεύματι*, praying upon every opportunity in your spirit: and, *Ἀγρυπνεῖτε ἐν ᾧ ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ δεόμενοι*, Luk. 21. 36. *Be watchfull praying in every season.* And this sense seems probably to be chiefly intended by this Apostle, whenever he hath (as he hath often) this expression, *πάντοτε δὲ χαρισεῖν*, that we embrace every overture, or fit occasion of giving thanks.

'Tis true, no time is unseasonable to doe it; every moment we receive favours, and therefore every minute we owe Thanks: yet there are some especial seasons, that do more importunately require them. We should be like those trees, that bear fruit (more or less) continually; but then more kindly, and more abundantly, when more powerfully cherished by the heavenly warmth.

When any fresh, any rare, any remarkable Benefit happens to us; when prosperous success attends our honest endeavours; when unexpected favours fall as it were of their own accord into our bosoms; (like the grain in the Golden

den age springing up ἀπαρτα καὶ ἀνήποτα, without our care, or our toil, for our use and enjoyment;) when we are delivered from streights in our apprehension inextricable, surmount difficulties seeming insuperable, escape hazards (as we suspected) inevitable: Then is a special season presented us of offering up the sacrifice of praise to the God of mercy, help, and victory.

When we revolve in our minds (as we should often doe) the favourable passages of Providence, that in the whole course of our lives have befallen us: how in our extreme poverty and distress (when, perhaps, no help appeared, and all hopes seemed to fail us) God hath raised us up friends, who have commiserated, comforted, and succoured us; and not onely so, but hath changed our sorrowfull condition into a state of joy; hath (to use the Psalmist's expressions) *turned our mourning* Psal. 30. 11. *into dancing*; hath *put off our sackcloth,* and *girded us with gladness*; hath *con-* Psal. 31. 7, 8. *sidered our trouble, and known our soul in adversity*; hath *set our feet in a large room*, and furnished us with plentiful means of subsistence: how in the various changes, and adventures, and tra-
vails

vails of our life, upon sea and land, at home and abroad, among friends and strangers and enemies, he hath protected us from wants and dangers; from devouring diseases, and the distempers of infectious air; from the assaults of bloody thieves, and barbarous pirates; from the rage of fire, and fury of tempests; from disastrous casualties; from treacherous surprises; from open mischiefs, that with a dreadful face approached, and threatned our destruction: Then most opportunely should we with all thankfull exultation of mind admire and celebrate *our strength, and our deliverer; our faithfull refuge in trouble, and the rock of our salvation.*

Also when the ordinary effects of Divine Providence do in any advantageous manner present themselves to our view; when we peruse the volumes of story, and therein observe the various events of humane action; especially the seasonable rewards of Vertue, the notable protections and deliverances of Innocence, and the unexpected punishments of malicious Wickedness: Then we should with thankfull acclamations celebrate the Divine Goodness and Justice; joyning in consort with that Heavenly

venly quire, and saying, *Allelujah* ; *Sal-* Apoc.19.1,2.
vation, and glory, and honour, and power
unto the Lord our God : for true and
righteous are his judgments.

Or, when we contemplate the wonderfull works of Nature, and, walking about at our leisure, gaze upon this ample theatre of the world, considering the stately beauty, constant order, and sumptuous furniture thereof; the glorious splendour, and uniform motion of the Heavens; the pleasant fertility of the Earth; the curious figure and fragrant sweetness of Plants; the exquisite frame of Animals; and all other amazing miracles of Nature, wherein the glorious Attributes of God (especially his transcendent Goodness) are most conspicuously displayed; (so that by them not onely large acknowledgments, but even gratulatory Hymns, as it were, of praise have been extorted from the mouths of *Aristotle, Pliny, Galen*, and such like men, never suspected guilty of an excessive devotion :) Then should our hearts be affected with thankfull sense, and our lips break forth into his praise.

Yea, from every object of Sense, from every event of Providence, from every

ry common occurrence we may extract fit matter of Thanksgiving: as did our Saviour, when, considering the stupid infidelity of those proud people of *Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum*, (who were not at all affected by his miraculous Works, nor moved to repentance by his pathetic Discourses,) and comparing it with the pious credulity of his meaner Disciples, he brake forth into that Divine ejaculation; *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast concealed these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* Ἐν οὐκείῳ τῇ καὶ τῷ ἀποστόλῃ τοῖς ἱεροῖς εἶπε, saith the Evangelical narration; *Upon that occasion Jesus thus spake:* he embraced that convenient opportunity of thankfully acknowledging God's wise and gracious dispensation. And frequent occasion is afforded us daily (were our minds suitably disposed) of doing the like.

But so much concerning the Time of performing this Duty.

IV. We proceed to the Matter thereof, *For all things.* S. Chrysostome (in his Commentary upon the 145. Psalm) having enumerated several particulars for

for which we are bound to thank God ;
 " Because (I recite his words punctually rendred) " Because (saith he)
 " he hath made us, who before had no
 " being, and made us such as we are ;
 " because he upholds us being made,
 " and takes care of us continually, both
 " publickly and privately, secretly and
 " openly, with and without our knowledge ; for all visible things created
 " for our sake, the ministry of them afforded to us ; the conformation of
 " our Bodies , the nobleness of our
 " Souls ; his daily Dispensations by miracles, by laws, by punishments ; his
 " various and incomprehensible Providence ; for the chief of all, that he
 " hath not spared his onely-begotten
 " Son for our sake ; the Benefits conferred on us by Baptism, and the other
 " holy Mysteries, (or Sacraments ;) the
 " ineffable good things to be bestowed
 " on us hereafter , the Kingdom of heaven, the Resurrection, the enjoyment
 " of perfect Bliss ; having, I say, in these words comprised the things for which we are obliged to thank and praise God, he thus despondently concludes : (Ἄν
 ῥ' ἑκαστὸν πρὸς τέτταρ' ἀναλέγῃ, εἰς πέλαγρον
 ἀρᾶν ἐμπεσεῖ) ὑποθέτων, καὶ ὅλῃ
 πύλῃ

πῶς ἂν ἰσθῶμεν τὸ Θεῶν.) "If
 "any one shall endeavour to recount
 "particularly every one of these things,
 "he will but plunge himself into an
 "unexpressible deep of Benefits, and
 "then perceive for how unexpressibly
 "and inconceivably many good things
 "he stands engaged to God. And to
 the like *Non-plus* doth the devout Psal-
 mist seem to be reduced, when he thus
 exclaims ; *How precious are thy thoughts*
unto me, O God ? how great is the summe
of them ? If I should count them, they are
more in number then the sand.

Psal. 139. 17,
 18.
 Ps. 36. 5, 6, 7.

I shall not therefore confound my
 self, by launching too far into this im-
 mense Ocean ; nor strive minutely to
 compute the incomprehensible summe
 of the Divine Benefits : but onely ob-
 serve, that in gross, according to our A-
 postle's calculation, all things, which
 how-ever happen to us, are ingredients
 thereof. No occurrence (great or small,
 common or particular, present or past,
 pleasant or sad, perpetual or transito-
 ry) is excluded from being the subject
 of our Thanksgiving : each one may
 prove beneficial to us ; and we are with
 a chearfull contentedness, and a grate-
 full resentment, to receive them all from
 God's

God's hand. But to observe some little distinction : I say,

I. We are to give thanks, not onely for great and notable Benefits, but for the least and most ordinary Favours of God: though indeed none of God's Favours are in themselves small and inconsiderable. Men are wont to bless themselves, if they receive but a transient glance from a Prince's eye ; a smile from a great personage ; any slender intimation of regard from him that is in capacity to doe them good : what is it then to receive the least testimony of his good will, from whom alone every good thing can be expected ; upon whose disposal all happy success of our wishes, our hopes, and our endeavours do entirely depend ? We repute him unjust, who withholds the least part of what is due from the true owner : and is not he ingratefull then, that omits to render thanks for the least of Divine mercies ?

There is one glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, another of the Stars, saith S. Paul. Some works of God indeed excell in lustre ; yet all are glorious, all are to be discerned, all to be esteemed, and thankfully entertained by us. The

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brightness of the one should not wholly obscure the other ; if it do, it argues the weakness of our sense, the dullness of our spiritual faculty. For every beam of light that delights our eye, for every breath of air that cheers our spirits, for every drop of pleasant liquor that cools our thirst, for every minute of comfortable repose, for every step we safely take, for the happy issue of the least undertaking, for escaping the vengeance due to an idle word, or a wanton thought, we owe a hymn of praise to God. But,

2. We are to render thanks, not only for new and present Benefits, but for all we have formerly, all that we may hereafter receive. We find *David* not only frequently acknowledging the gracious dispensations of Providence toward him through the whole course of his life, but looking back in his thankful Devotions as far as his very original being, and praising God for favours conferred on him beyond his memory, yea before his life. *I will praise thee, saith he, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made : marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made*

*Psal. 139. 14,
15, 16.*

made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, whenas yet there was none of them. And S. Paul, yet farther reflecting his grateful consideration, blesses God for his favour commenced before the beginning of things. Blessed (saith he) be God Ephes. 1. 3, 4. and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us before the foundation of the world.

Neither doth the memory onely of former, and the enjoyment of present, but the hope and foresight also of future Blessings worthily claim our thanks. For, (saith S. Peter) *Blessed be God 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead: to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for you.* Beasts onely, and men not much better then they, are affected with present good turns: but men of honest and generous temper resent indifferently the

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obligations of all times. Sense doth not confine their Gratitude, nor absence remove, nor age wear it out. What once is done, is ever done to them; and what of courtesie is purposed, seems to them performed. But having before discoursed somewhat largely concerning the remembrance of Benefits, I leave this point. Furthermore,

3. We should bless God, not onely for new, rare, extraordinary accidents of Providence, but for the common and daily benefits and indulgences thereof. These Favours are usually the greatest, and most valuable in their own nature.

Quem verò astrorum ordines, quem dierum notitiamque vicissitudines, quem mensium temperatio, quæque ea quæ nobis gignuntur ad fruendum non gratum esse cogant; hunc hominem omnino numerare qui decet?
Cic. de Leg. II.

(For what can be imagined of higher consequence to us, then the preservation of our Lives, and of our Estates, by which they are comfortably maintained; then the continuance of our Bodies in good health, and our Minds

in their right wits; then the knowledge of heavenly Truth, the encouragements to Vertue and Piety, the assistences of Divine Grace, and the promises of eternal Bliss continually exhibited to us?) Shall the commonness and continuance of these exceeding Favours, that they
are

are not given us once onely, and transitorily, but continued, (that is, given us so often as time hath instants,) and with an uninterrupted perseverance renewed unto us ; shall this abate and enervate our Gratitude, which in all reason should mainly encrease and confirm it ? But this point I also touched before, and therefore forbearing to insist thereon, I proceed.

4. We should give thanks, not onely for private and particular, but for publick Benefits also, and for such as befall others. *I exhort therefore (saith S. Paul)* 1 Tim. 2. 1. *before all things, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all men : not prayers onely, for good things to be bestowed on others ; but thanksgivings also, for the Benefits received by others. (And εὐχαριστίας in our Text, however otherwise commonly interpreted, may well admit this sense also ; and be taken indifferently, pro omnibus, for all persons, and propter omnia, for all things.)*

We are all Citizens of the World, and concerned in its good constitution ; and thence obliged thankfully to adore the mighty Upholder and wise Governour thereof, praising him for all the general

*Vid. Chrys. in
2 Cor. Or. 2.*

Benefits liberally poured forth upon mankind. We partake in the commodities of Civil Society ; and therefore should heartily thank him , by whose gracious disposal Order is maintained , Peace continued , Justice administred , Plenty provided , our Lives made safe and sweet to us therein. We are Members of a Church, and highly interested in the prosperous estate and well-being thereof : when Unity therefore is preserved , and Charity abounds ; when Knowledge is encreased, and Vertue encouraged ; when Piety flourishes, and Truth triumphs therein ; we are bound to render all possible thanks to the gracious Bestower of those inestimable Blessings.

We are much mistaken in our account, if we either determine our own concernments, or measure this Duty, by the narrow rule of our private advantage : for, subducting either the Benefits commonly indulged to mankind, or those which accrue from the welfare of publick society , what possibility will remain of subsistence, of safety, of content unto us ? what but confusion, want, violence, and disquiet ?

As we are concerned with our utmost

most endeavours to promote, to wish and pray for, to delight and rejoyce in the publick good of mankind, the peace of our Country, the prosperity of *Sion*; so we are to bless and thank him, by whose gracious help and furtherance they are attained.

If we consult all History, (Sacred, and civil,) we shall find it to contain hardly any thing else considerable, but the earnest endeavours of good men for publick benefit, and their thankfull acknowledgments to the Divine goodness for it. *Moses, David, Nehemiah, S. Paul,* all the Prophets, and all the Apostles, what other things memorable did they doe, but serve God in procuring publick Good, and bless God for conferring it?

Neither onely as we are combined with others in common interest, but without selfish respects, purely out of charity, and humanity, and ingenuous pity, are we obliged to thank God for the Benefits he is pleased to impart to others. If upon these accounts we are commanded to *doe good to all men; to rejoyce with those that rejoyce; to love even those that hate us, and bless those that curse us*; 'tis (by fair consequence) surely in-

Gal. 6. 10.
Rom. 12. 15.
Matt. 5. 44.

tended, that we should also bless God for the good issue of our honest endeavours, or of our good wishes for them.

And verily could we become endowed with this excellent quality of delighting in others good, and heartily thanking God for it, we needed not to envy the wealth and splendour of the greatest Princes, not the wisdom of the profoundest Doctours, not the religion of the devoutest Anchorets, no, nor the happiness of the highest Angels: for upon this supposition, as the glory of all is God's, so the content in all would be ours. All the fruit they can perceive of their happy condition (of what kind soever) is, to rejoyce in it themselves, and to praise God for it: and this should we then doe as well as they. My neighbour's good Success is mine, if I equally triumph therein: his Riches are mine, if I delight to see him enjoy them: his Health is mine, if it refresh my spirits: his Vertue mine, if I by it am better'd, and have hearty complacence therein. By this means a man derives a confluence of all joy upon himself, and makes himself, as it were, the centre of all Felicity; enriches himself with the plenty, and satiates himself with the pleasure.

pleasure of the whole world: reserving to God the praise, he enjoys the satisfaction of all good that happens to any.

Thus we see *David* frequently thanking God, not for his Favour onely and mercy shewed peculiarly to himself, but for his common munificence toward all; for (to use his own phrases) *his goodness to all, and his tender mercies over all his works*; for executing judgment in behalf of the oppressed; for feeding the hungry; for loosening the prisoners; for opening the eyes of the blind; for raising them that are bowed down; for preserving the strangers, and relieving the fatherless and widow; for lifting up the meek; for loving, and caring for, and defending the righteous; for opening his hand, and satisfying the desire of every living thing; for giving to the beast his food, and to the young ravens when they cry unto him; in a word, for his goodness to every particular creature, not excluding the most contemptible, nor the most savage of all. And how affectionately doth Saint *Paul* every-where thank God for the growth in grace and spiritual wisdom; for the patience in affliction, and perseverance in faith, of those good Christians he writes unto? So should, with an

Psal. 145. 9.

Psal. 146. 7, 8, 9.

Psal. 147. 6.

1 Pet. 5. 7.

Psal. 5. 11.

Psal. 104. 28.

& 145. 16.

Psal. 147. 9.

The Ninth Sermon.

unrestrained exuberance, both our Charity to men, and our Gratitude to God abound. But moreover,

5. We are obliged to give thanks, not onely for pleasant and prosperous occurrences of Providence, but for those also which are adverse to our desire, and distastfull unto our natural sense; for Poverty, Sicknes, Disgrace; for all the Sorrows and Troubles, the Disasters and Disappointments that befall us. We are bound to pay thanks, not for our Food onely, but for our Physick also: (which though ingratifull to our palate, is profitable for our health :) We are obliged, in the School of Providence, not onely for the good Instructions, but for the seasona-

ble Corrections also vouchsafed unto us, (whereby though our senses are offended, our manners are bettered.) What-ever proceeds from good purpose, and tends to a happy end, that is graciously designed, and effectually conduces to our good; is a fit subject of Thanksgiving: and such may all Adversities prove unto us. They proceed usually from love and kind intention toward us: for,

Τὸν Θεὸν ὁμοίως ἀν-
υμῆν χεῖν, καὶ καλῶντα,
καὶ ἀνίστα καλῶσας. ἀμ-
φότερα γὰρ κηδεμονίας, ἀμ-
φότερα ἀγαθότητος, &c.
Chrysost. in Psal. 148.

for, Whom God loveth, he chasteneth, and Heb. 12. 6:
 scourgeth every son whom he receiveth :
 and, I know, O Lord, (saith David) Psal. 119. 75.
 that thy judgments are right, and that
 thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me : in
 faithfulness, that is, with a sincere inten-
 tion of doing me good.

God thoroughly knows our constitu-
 tion, what is noxious to our health, and
 what may remedy our distempers ; and
 therefore accordingly disposeth to us
 — *pro jucundis aptissima quæque* — ;
 in stead of pleasant hony, he sometimes
 prescribes wholesome wormwood for us.
 We are our selves greatly ignorant of
 what is conducible to our real good,
 and, were the choice of our condition
 wholly permitted to us, should make
 very foolish, very disadvantageous e-
 lections.

We should (be sure) all of us em-
 brace a rich and plentiful Estate : when-
 as, God knows, that would make us
 slothfull and luxurious, swell us with
 pride and haughty thoughts, encumber
 us with anxious cares, and expose us
 to dangerous temptations ; would ren-
 der us forgetfull of our selves, and neg-
 lectfull of him. Therefore he wisely
 disposeth Poverty unto us ; Poverty,
 the

the mother of Sobriety, the nurse of Industry, the mistress of Wisdom; which will make us understand our selves, and our dependence on him, and force us to have recourse unto his help. And is there not reason we should be thankfull for the means by which we are delivered from those desperate mischiefs, and obtain these excellent advantages?

We should all (certainly) chuse the Favour and Applause of men: but this, God also knows, would corrupt our minds with vain conceit, would intoxicate our fancies with spurious pleasure, would tempt us to ascribe immoderately to our selves, and sacrilegiously to deprive God of his due honour. Therefore he advisedly suffers us to incur the Disgrace and Displeasure, the Hatred and Contempt of men; that so we may place our glory onely in the hopes of his Favour, and may pursue more earnestly the purer delights of a good Conscience. And doth not this part of Divine Providence highly merit our thanks?

We would all climb into high Places, not considering the precipices on which they stand, nor the vertiginousness of
our

our own brains : but God keeps us safe in the humble valleys, allotting to us employments which we are more capable to manage.

We should perhaps insolently abuse Power, were it committed to us : we should employ great Parts on unwieldy Projects, as many do, to the disturbance of others, and their own ruine : vast Knowledge would cause us to over-value our selves, and contemn others : enjoying continual Health, we should not perceive the benefit thereof, nor be mindfull of him that gave it. A futable mediocrity therefore of these things the Divine Goodness allotteth unto us, that we may neither starve for want, nor surfeit with plenty.

In fine, the advantages arising from Afflictions are so many, and so great, that (had I time, and were it seasonable to insist largely on this subject) it were easie to demonstrate, that we have great reason, not onely to be contented with, but to rejoyce in, and to be very thankful for all the crosses and vexations we meet with : to receive them chearfully at God's hand, as the medicines of our Soul, and the condiments of our fortune ; as the arguments of his Good
will

will, and the instruments of Vertue; as solid grounds of Hope, and comfortable presages of future Joy unto us.

6. Lastly, we are obliged to thank God, not onely for Corporeal and temporal Benefits, but also (and that principally) for Spiritual and eternal Blessings. We are apt, as to desire more vehemently, to rejoyce more heartily in the fruition, and more passionately to bewail the loss of temporal good things; so more sincerely and seriously to express our gratitude for the reception of them, then for others relating to our spiritual good, to our everlasting welfare. Wherein we misjudge and misbehave our selves extreamly. For, as much as the reasonable Soul (that goodly image of the Divine Essence, breathed from the mouth of God) doth in dignity of nature, and purity of substance, excell this feculent lump of organized clay, our Body; as the blisfull ravishments of Spirit surpass the dull satisfactions of Sense; as the bottomless depth of Eternity exceeds that shallow surface of Time, which terminates this transitory life: in such proportion should our appetite unto, our complacence in, our gratitude for spiritual Blessings transcend

scend the affections (respectively) engaged about these corporeal accommodations.

Consider that injunction of our Saviour to his Disciples ; *In this rejoyce* Luk. 10. 20. *not, that the spirits are subject unto you : but rather rejoyce, because your names are written in heaven. Rejoyce not, that is, be not at all affected with this (although in it self very rare accomplishment, eminent privilege, glorious power of working that indeed greatest of miracles , subjecting Devils ; that is, baffling the shrewdest craft, and subduing the strongest force in nature,) in comparison of that delight, which the consideration of the Divine Favour in order to your eternal Felicity doth afford.*

We are, 'tis true, greatly indebted to God for our Creation, for that he hath extracted us from nothing, and placed us in so lofty a rank among his creatures ; for the excellent Faculties of Soul and Body, wherewith he hath endued us ; and for many most admirable prerogatives of our outward Estate : but much more for our Redemption, and the wonderfull circumstances of unexpressible love and grace therein
decla-

declared; for his descending to a conjunction with our Nature, and elevating us to a participation of his; for dignifying us with more illustrious titles, and instating us in a sure capacity of a much superiour Happiness. Our daily Food deserves well a Grace to be said before and after it: but how much more that constant provision of Heavenly Manna, the Evangelical Verity; those savoury delicacies of Devotion, whereby our Souls are nourished to eternal life? 'Tis a laudable custom, when we are demanded concerning our health, to answer, *Well, I thank God*: but much more reason have we to say so, if our Conscience can attest concerning that sound constitution of Mind, whereby we are disposed vigorously to perform those verueous functions, due from reasonable nature, and conformable to the Divine Law. If for the prosperous success of our worldly attempts; for avoiding dangers, that threatned corporal pain and damage to us; for defeating the adversaries of our secular quiet, we make *Te Deum laudamus* our *Entrinnum*, (our song for victory:) how much more for the happy progress of our Spiritual affairs; (affairs

(affairs of incomparably-highest consequence;) for escaping those dreadful hazzards of utter ruine, of endless torture; for vanquishing Sin and Hell, those irreconcilable enemies to our everlasting peace; are we obliged to utter triumphall *Anthymns* of joy and thankfulness?

This is the order observed by the Psalmist: inciting his *Soul* to *blefs God* Psal. 103. 1, &c. for *all his benefits*, he begins with the consideration of God's mercy in pardoning his Sins; then proceeds to his goodness in bestowing temporal Favours. *Who forgiveth all thy sins*, leads the van; *Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things*, brings up the reere in the enumeration and acknowledgment of God's Benefits. That our minds are illustrated with the knowledge of God and his glorious Attributes, of *Christ* and his blessed Gospel, of that streight path which conducteth to true Happiness; that by Divine assistance we are enabled to elude the allurements, to withstand the violences of temptation, to assuage immoderate desires, to bridle exorbitant passions, to correct vicious inclinations of mind; requires more our hearty thanks, then for that we were able by our natural

tural wit to penetrate the abstrusest mysteries ; or to subjugate Empires by our bodily strength. The forgiveness of our Sins doth more oblige us to a gratefull acknowledgment of the Divine Goodness, then should God enrich us with all the treasures contained in the bowells of the Earth, or bottom of the Ocean. One glimpse of his favourable countenance should more enflame our affections, then being invested with all the imaginable splendour of worldly glory.

Of these inestimable Benefits, and all the advantageous circumstances where-with they are attended, we ought to maintain in our hearts constant resentments ; to excite our thankfulness, to kindle our love, to quicken our obedience, by the frequent contemplation of them.

Thus have I (though, I confess, much more slightly then so worthy a subject did require) prosecuted the several particulars observable in these words. I should conclude with certain Inducements persuasive to the practice of this Duty ; whereof I have in the tenour both of the former and present Discourse

course insinuated divers, and could propound many more : but (in compliance with the time) I shall content my self briefly to consider onely these three very obvious ones.

First therefore, We may consider, I.
that there is no disposition what-ever more deeply radicated in the originall constitution of all Souls endued with any kind of perception or passion, then being sensible of Benefits received; being kindly affected with love and respect toward them that exhibit them; being ready with sutable expressions to acknowledge them, and to endeavour competent recompences for them. The worst of men, the most devoid of all not onely piety, but humanity and common ingenuity, the most barbarous and most wicked, (whom neither sense of equity nor respect to law, no promise of reward or fear of vengeance can any-wise engage to doe things just and fitting, or restrain from enormous actions,) retain notwithstanding something of this natural inclination, and are usually sensible of good turns done unto them. Experience teaches us thus much; and so doth that sure oracle of our Saviour: *If (saith he) you doe good to those* Luk. 6. 33.

The Ninth Sermon.

those who doe good to you, what thanks is it? for even sinners (that is, men of apparently leud and dissolute conversation) doe the same.

Yea even Beasts, and those not onely the most gentle and sociable of them, (the officious Dog, the tractable Horse, the docile Elephant,) but the wildest also and fiercest of them (the untamable Lion, the cruel Tiger, and ravenous Bear, as stories tell us, and experience attests) bear some kindness, shew some gratefull affection to those that provide for them.

Neither wild beasts onely, but even inanimate creatures seem not altogether insensible of Benefits, and lively represent unto us a natural abhorrence of Ingratitude. The Rivers openly discharge into the sea those waters, which by indiscernible conduits they derived thence: the Heavens remit in bountifull showrs what from the earth they had exhaled in vapour: and the Earth by a fruitfull encrease repays the culture bestowed thereon; if not, (as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* doth pronounce,) it deserves *cursing* and *reprobation*. So monstrous a thing, and universally abominable to nature, is all Ingratitude.

*Vid. Gell.
lib. V. cap.
14.*

Heb. 6. 8.

gratitude. And how execrable a prodigy is it then toward God, from whom alone we receive what-ever we enjoy, what-ever we can expect of good?

The Second Obligation to this Duty is most just and equal. For, (as * he said well) *Beneficium qui dare nescit, injustè petit* ; He unjustly requires (much more unjustly receives) a benefit, who is not minded to requite it. In all reason we are indebted for what is freely given, as well as for what is lent unto us. For the freeness of the giver, his not exacting security, nor expressing conditions of return, doth not diminish, but rather encrease the debt. He that gives, indeed, according to humane (or political) law, (which, in order to preservation of publick peace, requires onely a punctual performance of contracts,) transfers his right, and alienates his possession : but according to that more noble and perfect rule of ingenuity, (the Law which God and Angels and good men chiefly observe, and govern themselves by,) what is given is but committed to the faith, deposited in the hand, treasured up in the custody of him that receives it : and what more palpable iniquity is there, then to be-

II.

* Laberius.

Καλὸν ὃ δὴ
σάκευμα
κεκρίνη χα-
εῖς.

De Benef.
lib. 3. cap. 6.

tray the trust, or to detain the pledge, not of some inconsiderable trifle, but of inestimable good will? *Excepra Macedonum gente, (saith Seneca) non est ulla data adversus ingratum actio: In no nation (excepting the Macedonians) an action could be preferred against ingratefull persons, as so.* (Though Xenophon, no mean Authour, reports, that among the *Persians* also there were judgments assigned, and punishments appointed for Ingratitude.) However, in the court of Heaven, and at the tribunal of Conscience, no offender is more constantly arraigned, none more surely condemned, none more severely punished, then the ingratefull man.

Since therefore we have received all from the Divine bounty; if God should in requital exact, that we sacrifice our lives to the testimony of his Truth; that we employ our utmost pains, expend our whole estate, adventure our health, and prostitute all our earthly contents to his service; since he did but revoke his own, twere great injustice to refuse compliance with his demands: how much more, when he onely expects from us and requires some few acknowledgments of our obligation

tion to him, some little portions of our substance, for the relief of them that need, some easie observances of his most reasonable commands?

Thirdly, This is a most sweet and delightful Duty. *Praise the Lord*, (saith Psal. 135. 3. the most experienced Psalmist) *for the Lord is good; sing praises to his Name, for it is pleasant*: and otherwhere, *Praise the Lord, for it is good to sing praises to our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely.* Psal. 147. 1. Vid. Psal. 9. 1. The performance of this Duty, as it especially proceeds from good humour, and a chearfull disposition of mind; so it feeds and fomentes them; both root and fruit thereof are hugely sweet and sapid. Whence S. James; *If any man be afflicted, let him pray; is any merry, let him sing Psalms.* Jam. 5. 13. (Psalms, the proper matter of which is praise and thanksgiving.)

Other Duties of Devotion have something laborious in them, something disgustfull to our sense. Prayer minds us of our wants and imperfections; Confession induces a sad remembrance of our misdeeds and bad deserts: but Thanksgiving includes nothing uneasie or unpleasant; nothing but the memory and sense of exceeding Goodness.

All Love is sweet ; but that especially which arises, not from a bare apprehension onely of the object's worth and dignity, but from a feeling of its singular beneficence and usefulness unto us. And what thought can enter into the heart of man more comfortable and delicious then this, That the great Master of all things, the most wise and mighty King of Heaven and earth hath entertained a gracious regard, hath expressed a reall kindness toward us ? that we are in capacity to honour, to please, to present an acceptable sacrifice to him, who can render us perfectly happy ? that we are admitted to the practice of that wherein the supreme joy of Paradise, and the perfection of Angelical blis consists ? For Praise and Thanksgiving are the most delectable business of Heaven ; and God grant they may be our greatest delight, our most frequent employment upon earth.

To these I might adde such farther considerations. That this Duty is of all most acceptable to God, and most profitable to us. That Gratitude for Benefits procures more, disposing God to bestow, and qualifying us to receive them. That the serious performance of this

*Vid. Psal. 69.
30, 31.
Psal. 50. 13,
14, 23.*

this Duty efficaciously promotes, and facilitates the practice of other Duties ; since the more we are sensible of our obligations to God, the more ready we shall be to please him, by obedience to his Commandments. What S. Chrysostom Vid. diviniss. Chrysost. locum Tom.V. pag. 76. faith of Prayer, It is impossible that he who with competent promptitude of mind doth constantly apply himself thereto, should ever sin, is most especially true of this part of Devotion : for how can we at the same time be sensible of God's Goodness to us, and willingly offend him ? That the memory of past Benefits, and sense of present, confirms our Faith, and nourishes our hope of future. That the circumstances of the Divine Beneficence mightily strengthen the obligation to this Duty ; especially his absolute freeness in giving , and our total unworthiness to receive ; our very Ingratitude it self affording strong inducements to Gratitude. That giving thanks hath *de facto* been always the principall part of all Religion ; (whether instituted by Divine Command, or prompted by natural Reason, or propagated by general Tradition ;) the Ethnick devotion consisting (as it were totally) in the praise of

Plin. Epist.

of their gods, and acknowledgment of their Benefits; the *Jewish* more then half in Eucharistical oblations, and in solemn commemorations of providential favours; and that of the ancient Christians so far forth, that by-standers could hardly discern any other thing in their religious practice, then that they sang Hymns to *Christ*, and by mutuall sacraments obliged themselves to abstain from all villany. But I will rather wholly omit the prosecution of these pregnant Arguments, then be farther offensive to your patience.

Now the Blessed Fountain of all Goodnesse and Mercy inspire our hearts with his heavenly Grace, and thereby enable us, rightly to apprehend, diligently to consider, faithfully to remember, worthily to esteem, to be heartily affected with, to render all due acknowledgment, praise, love, and thankfull obedience for all his (infinitely-great and innumerably-many) Favours, Mercies, and Benefits freely conferr'd upon us: and let us say with David, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who onely doeth wondrous things; and blessed

Pal. 72. 18,
19.

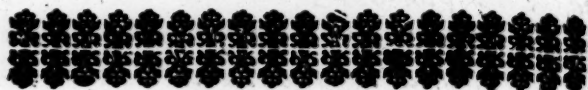
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sed be his glorious Name for ever, and
let the whole earth be filled with his
glory. Blessed be the Lord God of Is^{rl} Psal. 106.48.
rael from everlasting to everlasting :
and let all the people say, Amen.



The



On May 29.

The Tenth Sermon.

I TIM. 2. 1, 2.

1. *I exhort therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men :*

2. *For Kings, and for all that are in authority.*

I Tim. 1: 3.

Verse 6.

Vers. 5, 19.

SAINT Paul in his preceding discourse having insinuated directions to his Scholar, and Spiritual Son, *Timothy*, concerning the discharge of his office, of instructing men in their Duty according to the Evangelical Doctrine; (the main design whereof he teacheth to consist, not (as some men conceited) in fond stories, or *vain speculations*, but in practice of substantial Duties, holding a *sincere Faith*, maintaining a *good Conscience*, performing offices of *pure and hearty Charity*;) in pursuance of such general Duty, and as a principal instance thereof, he doth here
first

first of all exhort or, doth exhort that first of all all kinds of Devotion should be offered to God, as for all men generally, so particularly for Kings and Magistrates. From whence we may collect two particulars. 1. That the making of Prayers for Kings is a Christian Duty of great importance. (S. Paul

judging fit to exhort thereto *πρῶτον πάντων*, before all other things; or, to exhort that before all things it should be performed.) 2. That it is incumbent on the Pastours of the Church, (such as S. Timothy was,) to take special care, that this Duty should be performed in the Church; both publickly in the Congregations, and privately in the Retirements of each Christian: according to what the Apostle, after the proposing divers enforcements of this Duty, subsumeth in the 8. verse, *I will therefore, that men pray every-where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting.*

Παρακαλῶ
ἐν πρῶτον
πάντων ποιῆ-
σθαι

The First of these particulars, That it is a Duty of great importance to pray for Kings, I shall insist upon: it being indeed now very fit and seasonable to urge the practice of it, when it is perhaps commonly not much considered, or not well observed; and when there

is most need of it, in regard to the effects and consequences which may proceed from the conscionable discharge of it.

My endeavour therefore shall be to press it by divers Considerations, discovering our obligation thereto, and serving to induce us to its observance: some whereof shall be general, or common to all times; some particular, or suitable to the present circumstances of things.

I. The Apostle exhorteth Christians to pray for Kings with all sorts of Prayer: with *desires*, or *deprecations*, for averting evils from them; with *negotial*, or *petitions*, for obtaining good things to them; with *entreaties*, or *occasional intercessions*, for needfull gifts and graces to be collated on them: as, after S. Austin, Interpreters, in expounding S. Paul's words, commonly distinguish; how accurately, I shall not discuss; it sufficing, that assuredly the Apostle meaneth, under this variety of expression, to comprehend all kinds of Prayer. And to this I say we are obliged upon divers accounts.

Aug. Ep. 59.
Beza, Grotius, &c.

I. Common Charity should dispose

us to pray for Kings. This Christian disposition inclineth to universal benevolence and beneficence ; according to that Apostolical precept, *As we have opportunity, let us doe good unto all men :* Gal. 6. 10. it consequently will excite us to pray for all men ; seeing this is a way of exerting good will, and exercising beneficence, which any man at any time, if he hath the will and heart, may have opportunity and ability to pursue.

No man indeed otherwise can benefit all ; few men otherwise can benefit many ; some men otherwise can benefit none : but in this way any man is able to benefit all, or unconfinedly to oblige mankind, deriving on any somewhat of God's immense beneficence. By performing this good office, at the expence of a few good wishes address'd to the Sovereign Goodness, the poorest may prove benefactors to the richest, the meanest to the highest, the weakest to the mightiest of men : so we may benefit even those who are most remote from us, most strangers and quite unknown to us. Our Prayers can reach the utmost ends of the earth ; and by them our Charity may embrace all the world.

And from them surely *Kings* must
not

1 Tim. 2. 4,
5, 6.

not be excluded. For if because all men are our Fellow-creatures, and brethren by the same Heavenly Father, because all men are allied to us by cognation and similitude of nature, because all men are the objects of God's particular favour and care; if because all men are partakers of the common Redemption, by the undertakings of him who is the common Mediatour and Saviour of all men; and because all men, according to the gracious intent and desire of God, are designed for a consortship in the same blessed Inheritance; (which enforcements *S. Paul* in the Context doth intimate;) if, in fine, because all men do need Prayers, and are capable of benefit from them, we should be charitably disposed to pray for them: then must we also pray for *Kings*, who even in their personal capacity, as men, do share in all those conditions. Thus may we conceive *S. Paul* here to argue: *For all men*, saith he, *for Kings*; that is, consequently *for Kings*, or, particularly *for Kings*; to pray for whom, at least no less then for other men, universal Charity should dispose us.

Indeed, even on this account we may say, especially *for Kings*; the law of general

general Charity with peculiar advantage being applicable to them : for that law commonly is expressed with reference to our neighbour, that is, to persons with whom we have to doe, who come under our particular notice, who by any intercourse are approximated to us ; and such are *Kings* especially. For whereas the greatest part of men (by reason of their distance from us , from the obscurity of their condition, or for want of opportunity to converse with them) must needs slip beside us , so that we cannot employ any distinct thought or affection toward them : it is not so with *Kings* , who by their eminent and illustrious Station become very observable by us ; with whom we have frequent transactions, and mutual concerns ; who therefore in the strictest acception are our neighbours, whom we are charged to love as our selves ; to whom consequently we must perform this most charitable office of Praying for them.

2. To impress which consideration, we may reflect, that commonly we have onely this way granted us of exercising our Charity toward Princes ; they being situated aloft above the reach of private

*Privatorum
ista copia est,
inter se esse
munificos.
Auson. ad
Gratian.*

A a

vate

*Absit, Augu-
ste, & istud
Sancta Divi-
nitatis omen a-
vertat, ut tu
d quoquam
mortalium
expectes vi-
cem beneficii.
Mamerc. ad
Julian.*

Psal. 16. 2.

vate beneficence: so that we cannot en-
rich them, or relieve them by our alms;
we cannot help to exalt or prefer them
to a better state; we can hardly come
to impart good advice, seasonable con-
solation, or wholesome reproof to them;
we cannot profit or please them by fa-
miliar conversation. For as in divers o-
ther respects they resemble the Divini-
ty; so in this they are like it, that we
may say to them, as the Psalmist to God,
*Thou art my Lord; my goodness exten-
deth not to thee.* Yet this case may be
reserved, wherein the poorest Soul may
benefit the greatest Prince, imparting
the richest and choicest goods to him:
He may be indebted for his safety, for
the prosperity of his affairs, for God's
mercy and favour toward him, to the
Prayers of his meanest vassal. And thus
to oblige Princes, methinks, we should
be very desirous; we should be glad to
use such an advantage, we should be am-
bitious of such an honour.

3. We are bound to pray for Kings
out of Charity to the Publick; because
their Good is a general Good, and the
Communities of men (both Church and
State) are greatly concerned in the Bles-
sings by Prayer derived on them.

The

The Safety of a Prince is a great part of the common welfare ; the Commonwealth, as it were, living and breathing in him : his fall, like that of a tall Cedar , (to which he is compared ,) shaking the earth , and discomposing the State ; putting things out of course , and drawing them into new channels ; translating the administration of affairs into untried hands , and an uncertain condition. Hence, *Let the King live*, (which our Translatours render, *God save the King*,) was an usual form of salutation, or prayer : and , *O King live for ever*, was a customary address to Princes, whereto the best men did conform, even in application to none of the best Princes ; as *Nehemiah* to King *Artaxerxes*, and *Daniel* to King *Darius*. Hence not onely good King *David* is called *the light of Israel* ; (*Thou shalt not*, said *Abishai*, *any more go out with us to battel, that thou quench not the light of Israel* ;) but even the wicked and perverse King *Zedekiah* is by the Prophet *Jeremy* himself (who had been so misused by him) styled *the breath of our nostrils*. (*The breath*, saith he, *of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits.*) Hence not onely the fall of good King

Isa. 2. 13.

1 King. 1. 25.

2 King. 11.

12.

2 Chr. 23. 11.

1 King. 1. 31.

Dan. 2. 4. &

3. 9. & 5. 10.

& 6. 6.

Neh. 2. 3.

Dan. 6. 21.

2 Sam. 21. 17.

2 King. 24.

19.

Jer. 32. 3.

Lam. 4. 20.

Zech. 12. 11. *Josiah* was so grievously lamented ; but
 2 Chr. 35. 24. a solemn mourning was due to that of
 2 Sam. I. 12, *Saul* ; and, *Ye daughters of Jerusalem*,
 24. weep for *Saul*, was a strain becoming the
 mouth of his great Successour King *Da-
 vid*. Hence the Primitive Christians,
 who could not be constrained to swear
 by the *Genius* of *Cæsar*, did not yet, in
 compliance with the usual practice,
 scruple to swear by their *health*, or *saf-
 ety* ; that is, to express their wishing it,
 with appeal to God's testimony of their
 sincerity therein ; as *Joseph* may be con-
 ceived to have sworn* *by the life of Pha-
 raoh*. Hence well might the people tell
 King *David*, *Thou art worth ten thou-
 sand of us* ; seeing the publick was so
 much interested in his safety, and had
 suffered more in the loss of him, then
 if a myriad of others had miscarried.

The Honour likewise of a Prince is
 the glory of his people ; seeing it is
 founded on qualities or deeds tending
 to their advantage ; seeing it can hard-
 ly be supposed that he should acquire
 honour without their aid and concur-
 rence, or that he should retain it with-
 out their support and their satisfaction.
 And as the chief grace and beauty of a
 body is in the head, and the fairest or-
 naments

naments of the whole are placed there; so is any Commonwealth most dignified and beautified by the reputation of its Prince.

The Wealth and Power of a Prince are the supports, and securities of a State: he thereby being enabled to uphold and defend its safety, its order, its peace; to protect his people from foreign injuries and invasions; to secure them from intestine broils and factions; to repress outrages and oppressions and annoy them. Ps. 72. 4—

The Prosperity of a Prince is inseparable from the prosperity of his people; they ever partaking of his fortunes, and thriving or suffering with him. For as when the Sun shineth brightly, there is a clear day, and fair weather over the world: so when a Prince is not overclouded with adversity, or disastrous occurrences, the publick State must be serene, and a pleasant state of things will appear. Then is the Ship in a good condition, when the Pilot in open Sea, with full sails and a brisk gale, chearfully steereth on toward his designed port.

Especially the Piety and Goodness of

A a 3 a Prince

a Prince is of vast consequence, and yieldeth infinite benefit to his Country.

Flexibiles in quamcunque partem ducimur à Principe, atque, ut ità dicam, sequaces sumus. Huic enim chari, huic probati esse cupimus; quod frustra speraverint dissimiles. Eoque obsequii continuatione pervenimus, ut propè omnes homines unius moribus vivamus.

Plin. Paneg.

Vita Principis censura est, eaque perpetua; ad hanc dirigimur, ad hanc convertimur; nec tam imperio nobis opus est, quàm exemplo.

Ibid.

* Eccles 10. 2.

For, *Vita Principis Censura est*, The life of a Prince is a calling of other mens lives to an account. His * Example hath an unspeakable influence on the manners of his people, who are apt in all his garb, and every fashion to imitate him. His Practice is more powerfull then his Commands, and often doth controll them. His Authority hath the great stroke in encouraging Vertue, and checking Vice, if

it bendeth that way; the dispensation of honours and rewards, with the infliction of ignominies and corrections, being in his hand, and passing from it according to his inclinations. His Power is the shield of innocence, the fence of right, the shelter of weakness and simplicity against violences and frauds. His very Look (a smile or a frown of his countenance) is sufficient to advance goodness, and suppress wickedness; according to that of Solomon, *A King sitting in the throne of judgment scattereth away*

Prov. 20. 8.

away all evil with his eyes. His Goodness
 pleasing God procureth his favour, and
 therewith deduceth from Heaven all
 kinds of blessings on his people. And
 if those politick Aphorisms of the *Wise*
man be true, That *righteousness exalteth*
a nation, and establisheth a throne; That
when it goeth well with the righteous, the
city rejoiceth; and *the same by the bless-*
ing of the upright is exalted: then upon
 his inclinations to Vertue the advance-
 ment and stability of publick welfare
 do mainly depend. So for instance,
 how did Piety flourish in the times of
David, who loved, favoured, and practi-
 sed it? and what abundance of prosperi-
 ty did attend it? What shows of bless-
 ings (what peace, what wealth, what
 credit and glory) did God then pour
 down upon *Israel*? How did the good-
 ness of that Prince transmit favours and
 mercies on his Country till a long time
 after his decease? How often did God
 profess for his servant *David's* sake to pre-
 serve *Judah* from destruction? so that e-
 ven in the days of *Hezekiah*, when the
 King of *Affyria* did invade that Country,
 God by the mouth of *Isaiah* declared, I
 will defend this city to save it for mine
 own sake, and for my servant *David's* sake.

Prov. 14. 3, 4.
 & 16. 12.
 2 Sam. 7. 18.
 Prov. 11. 10,
 11.

2 Sam. 7. 9.

(Psal. 72. 7.)

(2 Sam. 7.

16.

1 King. 11.

13.

Jer. 33. 21.

Psal. 89. 29.

& 132. 10--.)

Isa. 37. 35.

(1 King. 11.

32, 34.)

We may indeed observe, that, according to the representation of things in Holy Scripture, there is a kind of moral connexion, or a communication of merit and guilt, between Prince and people; so that mutually each of them is rewarded for the Vertues, each is punished for the Vices of the other. As for the iniquities of a people, God withdraweth from their Prince the free communications of his Grace and of his Favour, (suffering him to incur sin, or to fall into misfortune; which was the case of that incomparably-good King *Josiah*, and hath been the fate of divers excellent Princes, whom God hath snatched away from people unworthy of them, or involved with such a people in common calamities; according to the rule propounded in the Law, of God's dealing with the *Israelites* in the case of their disobedience; and according to that of *Samuel*, *If ye shall doe wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King:*) so reciprocally, for the misdemeanours of Princes, (or in them, and by them,) God doth chastise their people. For what confusions in *Israel* did the offences of *Solomon* create? what mischiefs did issue thereon from *Jeroboam's*

2 King. 23.

25.

Isa. 3. 1, &c.

Deut. 28. 36.

1 Sam. 12.

25.

(Prov. 28. 2.)

1 King. 11.

33.

1 King. 15.

30.

2 King. 17.

21.

am's wicked behaviour? How did the
sins of *Manasseh* stick to his Country,
since that even after that notable Re-
formation wrought by *Josiah*, it is said,
Notwithstanding the Lord turned not 2 King. 23.
from the fierceness of his great wrath, 26.
wherewith his anger was kindled against
Judah, because of all the provocations
wherewith Manasses had provoked him?
And how sorely, by a tedious three 2 Sam. 21.1.
years famine, did God avenge *Saul's*
cruelty toward the *Gibeonites*?

Nor are onely the sins of bad Princes
affixed to people conspiring with them (Jer. 32.32.)
in impiety; for even of King *Hezekiah*
it is said, *But Hezekiah rendred not again* 2 Chr. 32.25.
according to the benefit done unto him;
for his heart was lifted up: therefore
there was wrath upon him, and upon Ju-
dah and Jerusalem. So the pride and in-
gratitude of an excellent Prince were
avenged on his Subjects. And when
good King *David* (God averting his
Grace from him) did fall into that ar-
rogant transgression of counting his for-
ces, that, as *Joab* prudently foretold,
became a cause of trespass to Israel: 1 Chr. 21.3,7.
and God (saith the Text) was dis-
pleased with this thing, therefore he smote
Israel.

David

David indeed seemed to apprehend some iniquity in this proceeding, expostulating thus, *Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbred? even I it is that have sinned, and done evil indeed: but as for these sheep, what have they done?* But God had no regard to his plea, nor returned any answer to it: for indeed God's wrath began with the people, and their King's sin was but a judgment executed on them: for, *The anger (it is said) of the Lord was kindled against Israel, (by their sin surely, which is the onely incentive of Divine wrath,) and he moved David against them, to say, Goe number Israel and Judah.*

So indeed it is, that Princes are bad, that they incurre great errors, or commit notable trespasses, is commonly imputable to the fault of Subjects; and is a just judgment by Divine Providence laid on them, as for other provocations, so especially for their want of Devotion, and neglecting duly to pray for them. For if they constantly with hearty sincerity and earnest fervency would in their behalf sue to God, who *fashioneth all the hearts of men*, who especially *holdeth the hearts of Kings in his hand, and turneth them whithersoever he will;*

we

we reasonably might presume, that God by his Grace would direct them into the right way, and incline their hearts to goodness ; that he would accomplish his own word in the Prophet, *I will* Isa. 60. 17.
make thy officers peace, and thine exactours righteousness ; that we might have occasion to pay thanksgivings like that of Ezra, *Blessed be the Lord God of our* Ezr. 7. 27.
fathers, who hath put such things as this in the King's heart, to beautifie the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem.

We are apt to impute the ill management of things, and the bad success waiting on it, unto Princes, being in appearance the immediate Agents and Instruments of it : but we commonly do therein mistake, not considering that our selves are most guilty, and blamable for it ; that it is an impious people, which maketh an unhappy Prince ; that their offences do pervert his counsells, and blast his undertakings ; that their prophaneness and indevotion do incense God's displeasure, and cause him to desert Princes, withdrawing his gracious conduct from them, and permitting them to be mis-led by temptation, by ill advice, by their own infirmities, lusts, and passions, into courses
fit

Pfal. 106.
32, 33.

Exod. 32.
Deut. 9.

2 King. 24.
20.

fit to punish a naughty people. So these were the causes of *Moses* his speaking unadvisedly with his lips, and that it went ill with him for their sakes : of *Aaron's* forming the molten calf ; of *David's* numbring the people ; of *Josiah's* unadvised enterprise against *Pharaoh Neco* ; of *Zedekiah's* rebellion against the *Assyrians*, (notwithstanding the strong dissuasions of the Prophet *Jeremy* ;) concerning which it is said, *For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, untill he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the King of Babylon.*

Considering which things, it is apparent, that Prayer for our Prince is a great office of Charity to the Publick ; and that in praying for his Safety, for his Honour, for his Wealth, for his Prosperity, for his Vertue, we do in effect pray for the same Benefits respectively to our Country ; that in praying for his Welfare, we do in consequence pray for the good of all our neighbours, our friends, our relations, our families, whose good is wrapped in his welfare, doth flow from it, doth hang upon it.

We

We are bound, and it is a very noble piece of Charity, to love our Country, sincerely to desire and earnestly to further its happiness, and therefore to pray for it; according to the advice and practice of the Psalmist, *O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.* We are obliged more especially upon the highest accounts, with dearest affection to love the Church, (our Heavenly Commonwealth, the Society of our Spiritual Brethren,) most ardently to tender its good, and seek its advantages; and therefore most urgently to sue for God's favour toward it: being ready to say after David, *Doe good, O God, in thy good pleasure to Sion, build the walls of Jerusalem. Arise, O Lord, and have mercy upon Sion; for the time to favour her, yea the set time is come.* Now these duties we cannot more easily, more compendiously, or more effectually discharge, then by earnestly praying for our Prince. seeing that if we do by our Prayers procure God's favour to him, we do certainly draw it on the State, and the Church. If God, moved by our devout importunities, shall please
to

Psal. 122. 6.
(128. 5.)

Psal. 122. 7.

Psal. 51. 18.

Psal. 102.

13, 16.

(Isa. 61. 1.)

Psal. 21. 4: to guard his Person from dangers, and to grant him a long life ; to endue his Heart with Grace, with the love and fear of himself, with a zeal of furthering publick good, of favouring piety, of discountenancing sin ; if God shall vouchsafe to inspire him with Wisdom, and to guide his counsels, to bless his proceedings, and to crown his undertakings with good success : then assuredly we have much promoted the publick interest ; then infallibly, together with these, all other blessings shall descend on us, all good will flourish in our land. This was the ancient practice of

* Cui nos quotidianis precibus supplicamus, ut te imprimis, quem rerum custodem voluit esse, custodiat ; deinde inspiret tibi voluntatem, quâ semper in amore Divini nominis perseveres ; quod est omnibus salutare, & tibi ad felicitatem, & nobis ad quietem. Lact. 7. 26.

Christians, and directed to this end. For, * *We* (saith Lactantius to Constantine) *with daily prayers do supplicate God, that he would first of all keep thee, whom he hath willed to be the keeper of things ; then that he would inspire into thee a will, whereby thou mayest ever persevere in the love of God's name ; which is salutary to all, both to thee for thy happiness, and to us for our quiet.*

4. Wherefore consequently our own interest, and Charity to our selves should

should dispose us to pray for our Prince. We being nearly concerned in his welfare, as parts of the publick, and as enjoying many private advantages thereby; we cannot but partake of his good, we cannot but suffer with him. We cannot live quietly, if our Prince is disturbed; we cannot live happily, if he be unfortunate; we can hardly live vertuously, if Divine Grace do not incline him to favour us therein, or at least restrain him from hindring us.

This is S. Paul's own consideration: *I exhort you, saith he, to make prayers for Kings—that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.* Upon such an account God did command the Jews to pray for the wel-

Nescio an plus moribus conferat Princeps, qui bonos esse patitur, quam qui cogit. Plin. Panegy.

fare of that Heathen State, under which they lived in Captivity: *And seek,* said Jer. 29. 7. *he, the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof ye shall have peace.* And for the like cause the Christians of old deemed themselves bound to pray for the Gentile Magistrates; according to that of Tertullian, *We pray for you, because with you the Empire is shaken:*

Vobiscum enim concutitur imperium: concussis etiam ceteris membris ejus, utique

and

que & nos, licet extranei à
turbis æstimemur, in aliquo
loco casûs invenimur. Tert.
Apol. c. 32.

and the other members of it
being shaken, assuredly even
we, how far soever we may be
thought from troubles, are
found in some place of the fall.
Farther,

5. Let us consider, that Subjects are
obliged in gratitude and ingenuity, yea
in equity and justice, to pray for their
Princes. For

They are most nearly related to us,
and allied by the most sa-
cred bands; being consti-
tuted by God, in his own
room, the Parents and
Guardians of their Coun-
try; being also avowed and
accepted for such by solemn

Quem sciens (Christia-
nus) à Deo suo constitui,
necesse est, ut & ipsum di-
ligat, & revereatur. &
honoret, & saluum velit.--
Tert. ad Scap. 2.

Vows, and most holy Sacraments of Al-
legiance: whence unto them as such
we owe an humble piety, a very respect-
full affection, a most dutifull obser-
vance; the which we cannot better ex-
press or exercise, then in our heartiest
Prayers for their welfare.

Jurant per
Deum, & per
Christum, &
per Spiritum
S. & per
Majestatem
Imperatoris,

quæ secundum Deum generi humano diligenda est, & colenda. Veget. 2. 5.

They by God are destined to be the
Protectours of the Church, the Patrons
of Religion, the Fosterers and cherishers
of

of Truth, of Vertue, of Piety: for of the Church in the Evangelical times it was prophesied, *Kings shall be thy nursing Fathers*; *Thou shalt suck the breasts of Kings*; *Kings shall minister to thee*: wherefore to them, not onely as men and citizens, but peculiarly as Christians, we owe the highest duty; and consequently we must pay the best Devotion for them.

To them we stand indebted for the greatest Benefits of common life: they necessarily do take much care, they undergoe great trouble, they are exposed to many hazzards for our advantage; that *under their shadow* we may enjoy safety and quiet, we may reap the fruits of our industry, we may possess the comforts and conveniencies of our life, with security from rapine, from contention, from solicitude, from the continual fears of wrong and outrage.

To their industry and vigilancy under God we owe the fair administration of Justice, the protection of Right and Innocence, the preservation of Order and Peace, the encouragement of Goodness, and correction of Wickedness: for they, as the Apostle telleth

B b us,

Rom. 13. 6. *us, are God's Ministers, attending continually on these very things.* They indeed so attend, as to deny themselves, and to forgoe much of their own ease, their pleasure, their satisfaction; being frequently perplexed with cares, continually enslaved to business, and subject to various inconveniencies, rendering their life to considerate Spectators very little desirable.

As therefore, according to our Lord's observation, they are usually styled
Luk. 22. 25. *Benefactors*, so they really are; even the worst of them (such as *Claudius*, or *Nero*, of whom our Apostles speak) in considerable measure; at least in comparison of Anarchy, and considering the mischiefs issuing from want of Govern-

ment. Οὐ κολακεία ἐστὶ τὸ πρῶμα.
ἐστὶ τὸ πρῶμα, ἀλλὰ καὶ
τὸ εὖ διακρίνειται λό-
γον — Chryl.
in 1 Tim. 2. 1.
The matter is not flattery; (saith S. Chrysostome, himself of all men farthest from a flatterer;) but according to the reason of the case we must esteem our selves much obliged to them for the pains they sustain in our behalf, and for the benefits we receive from them. For he indeed must be a very bad Governour, to whom that Speech of the Oratour Ter- tullus may not without glozing be ac-
A.R. 24. 2. 3. *commodated; Seeing that by thee we en-*
joy

joy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence; we accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.

However, what Seneca saith of Philosophers, that they of all men are most obliged, and most gratefull to Kings and Magistrates, because from their care they enjoy the leisure, quiet, and security of contemplating, and practising the best things; upon which account, saith he, they could not but reverence the authours of so great a good, as Parents; that is, or should be, far more true of Christians. That leisure (to use his words) which is spent with God, and which rendreth us like to God; the liberty of studying Divine truth, and of serving God with security and quiet; are inestimable benefits, for the which they are indebted to the protection of Magistrates: Therefore in all reason a gratefull retribution of good will, and of all good offices, particularly of our Prayers, is to be payed to

B b 2

them.

Nulli adversus Magistratus ac Reges gratiores sunt; nec immerito, nullis enim plus praestant, quam quibus sui tranquillo otio licet. Itaque hi quibus ad propositum bene vivendi confert securitas publica, necesse est auctorem hujus boni ut parentem colant—
Sen. Ep. 73.

Quam aestimamus hoc otium, quod inter Deos agitur, quod Deos facit?
Ibid.

Πῶς ἔνδεον
 αὐτοῖς, αὐ-
 τὰς, &c.?
 Chrys. ubi
 suprà.

them. *Is it not very absurd, saith S. Chry-
 sostome, that they should labour, and
 venture for us, and we not pray for
 them?*

6. Whereas we are by Divine com-
 mand frequently enjoyned to fear and
 reverence, to honour, to obey Kings,
 we should look on Prayer for them as
 a principal branch, and the neglect
 thereof as a notable breach of those du-
 ties. For

As to *Honour* and *Reverence*, it is
 plain, that no exteriour signification,
 in ceremonious unveiling or cringing
 to them, can so demonstrate it, as doth
 the wishing them well in our hearts,
 and from thence framing particular ad-
 dresses to the Divine Majesty for their
 welfare. Then which practice there
 can be no surer argument, that we hold
 them in great account and consideration.
 And how indeed can we much honour
 them, for whom we do not vouchsafe
 so much as to offer our good wishes,
 or to mention them in our intercessions
 unto him, who requireth us to make
 them for all men, and particularly for
 those for whom we are concerned?
 Doth not this omission evidently place
 them in the lowest rank, beneath the
 meanest

meanest of our friends and relations? doth it not imply a very slender regard had to them?

And as for *Obedience*, Prayer for Princes is clearly an instance thereof; seeing it may be supposed, that all Princes do require it from their Subjects. Not onely Christian Princes, who believe God the sole Dispenser of all good things, and the great efficacy of Devotion in procuring them from him, may be deemed to exact this beneficial office from us; but even Heathens and Infidels, from their dimme notion of a Sovereign Providence, (which hath ever been common in the world,) have made an account of this practice: as we may see by that Decree of the *Persian King* in *Ezra*, charging his Officers to furnish the *Jewish Elders* with sacrifices, *that, said he, they may offer sacrifices of sweet savour unto the God of Heaven, and pray for the life of the King, and of his Sons.* And that such was the practice of the *Romans* even in their Heathenish State, doth appear from those words of *Pliny*; *We have, saith he, been wont to make vows for the eternity of the Empire, and for the welfare of the Citizens, yea for the welfare of* Nuncupare vota & pro aternitate Imperii, & pro salute Civium, imò

pro salute
Principum,
ac propter il-
los pro ater-
nitate Imperii, solebamus. Plin. Paneg.

the Princes; and in their behalf for the
eternity of the Empire.

Not onely pious Princes with a serious desire will expect this Duty from us; but even profane ones in policy will demand it, as a decent testimony of respect to them, and a proper means of upholding their State; that they may seem to have place in the most serious regards, and solemn performances of their Subjects. So that to neglect this Duty, is ever a violation of our due obedience, and a kind of disloyalty to them. Again,

7. The Praying for Princes is a service peculiarly honourable, and very acceptable to God; which he will interpret as a great respect done to himself; for that thereby we honour his image and character in them, yielding in his presence this special respect to them as his Representatives; for that thereby we avow his Government of the world by them as his Ministers and Deputies; for that thereby we acknowledge all Power derived from him, and depending on his pleasure; we ascribe to him an Authority paramount above
all

Deo vel pri-
vatus, vel
militans ser-
vit, cum fide-
liter eum di-
ligit, qui
Deo regnat
autore. Ve-
get. 2. 5.

all earthly Potentates; we imply our persuasion, that he alone is absolute Sovereign of the world, *the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, so that Princes are nothing otherwise

then in subordination to him, can doe nothing without his succour, do owe to him all their power, their

safety, their prosperity and welfare; for that, in fine, thereby, disclaiming all other confidences *in any son of man*, we

signifie our entire submission to God's will, and sole confidence in his Providence. This service therefore is a very

gratefull kind of adoring our Almighty Lord; and as such S. Paul recommendeth it in the words immediately sub-

joyned to our Text, *For this* (saith he) *is good, and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour.*

8. Let us consider, that whereas wisdom guiding our Piety and Charity, will especially incline us to place our Devotion there where it will be most needfull and usefull, we therefore chiefly must pray for Kings, because they do most need our Prayers.

Their Office is most high, and hard to discharge well or happily: where-

B b 4 fore

*Temperans Majestatem
Caesaris infra Deum, ma-
gis illum commendo Deo.
Tert. Apol. c. 33.*

*Psal. 146. 3.
& 118. 8, 9.*

1 Tim. 2. 3.

fore they need extraordinary supplies of Gifts and Graces from the Divine bounty.

Their Affairs are of greatest weight and importance, requiring answerable skill, and strength to steer and wield them : wherefore they need from the Fountain of wisdom and power special communications of light, of courage, of ability to conduct, to support, to fortifie them in their managements ;

Psal. 51. 12. they need that God should uphold them
 πνεύματι ἡγεμονικῷ, with that Princely Spirit, for which King David prayed.

They often are to deliberate about matters of dark and uncertain consequence ; they are to judge in cases of dubious and intricate nature ; the which to resolve prudently, or to determine uprightly, no humane wisdom sufficiently can enable : wherefore they need

Isa. 11. 2. the spirit of counsel, and the spirit of judgment,
 & 28. 6. from the sole dispenser of them,
 Isa. 9. 6. the great Counsellour, and most righteous
 Psal. 7. 11. Judge. The wisest and ablest of them
 1 King. 3. 9. hath reason to pray with Solomon, Give
 Sap. 9. 4— thy servant an understanding heart, to
 (Psal. 72. 1.) judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad : for who is able to judge this thy so great a people ? That
 so

so what the *Wise man* saith may be verified, *A divine sentence is in the lips of* Prov. 16. 10.
the King, his mouth transgresseth not in
judgment : and that of the wise woman,
As an Angel of God, so is my Lord the 2 Sam. 14.
King to discern good and bad. 17.

They commonly are engaged in enterprises of greatest difficulty, insuperable by the might or industry of man ; in regard to which we may say with *Hannah, By strength shall no man prevail;* 1 Sam. 2. 9.
 with the *Preacher, The race is not to the* Eccles 9. 11.
swift, nor the battel to the strong ; with
 the *Psalmist, There is no King saved by* Psal. 33. 16.
the multitude of an host : wherefore they need aid and succour from the Almighty, to carry them through, and bless their designs with success.

They are most exposed to Dangers and Disasters; (standing like high towers, most obnoxious to the winds and tempests of fortune;) having usually many envious ill-willers, many disaffected malecontents, many both open enemies and close insidiatours ; from whose force or treachery no humane providence can sufficiently guard them : they do therefore need the protection of the ever-vigilant *Keeper of Israel, to secure them :* Psal. 121. 4.
for, Except the Lord keepeth the city, the & 91. 1—
watchman Psal. 127. 1,

watchman waketh but in vain ; Except
 Psal. 33. 16. the Lord preserve the King, his guards,
 his armies surround him to no purpose.

They have the natural Infirmities of
 other men, and far beyond other men
 are subject to external Temptations. The
 malicious Spirit (as in the case of *Job*,
 Zech. 3. 1. of *David*, of *Ahab*, of *Joshua* the High
 Priest is expressed) is ever waiting for
 occasion, ever craving permission of
 God to seduce and pervert them ; suc-
 cess therein being extreamly conducive
 to his villainous designs. The World
 continually doth assault them with all
 its advantages ; with all its baits of
 pleasure, with all its incitements to
 pride and vanity, to oppression and in-
 justice, to sloth, to luxury, to exorbi-
 tant self-will and self-conceit, to every
 sort of vicious practice. Their eminency
 of state, their affluence of wealth,
 Eccles 8. 4. their uncontrollable power, their ex-
 emption from common restraints, their
 continual distractions and encumbrances
 by varieties of care and business, their
 multitude of obsequious followers, and
 scarcity of faithfull friends, to advise, or
 reprove them, their having no obsta-
 cles before them to check their wills, to
 cross their humours, to curb their lusts
 and

and passions, are so many dangerous snares unto them : wherefore they do need plentiful measures of Grace, and mighty assistences from God, to preserve them from the worst errors and sins ; into which otherwise 'tis almost a miracle if they are not plunged.

And being they are so liable to sin, ὁ πλεῖστα
περὶ πῶν,
πλεῖστον ἁ-
μαρτάνει βρο-
των. they must consequently stand often in need of God's mercy to bear with them, and to pardon them.

They therefore upon so many accounts needing special help and grace from Heaven, do most need Prayers to derive it thence for them.

All Princes indeed do need them. Good Princes need many Prayers for God's help, to uphold and confirm them in their Vertue : Bad Princes need deprecations of God's wrath and judgment toward them, for offending his Majesty ; together with supplications for God's Grace to convert and reform them : the most desperate and incorrigible need Prayers, that God would over-rule and restrain them from doing mischief to themselves, and others. All Princes having many avocations, and temptations, hindring them to pray enough for themselves, do need supplemental

mental aids from the Devotions. of others.

Wherefore if we love Them, if we love our Country, if we love our Selves, if we tender the interests of Truth, of Piety, of common Good, we, considering their case, and manifold need of Prayers, will not fail earnestly to sue for them; that God would afford needfull assistance to them in the administration of their high Office, in the improvement of their great talents, in the conduct and management of their arduous Affairs; that he graciously would direct them in their perplexed Counsels, would back them in their difficult Undertakings, would protect their Persons from dangers, would keep their Hearts from the prevalency of temptations, would pardon their Failings and trespasses. Again,

Sap. 6. 4.

9. Whereas God hath declared, that he hath special regard to Princes, and a more then ordinary care over them, because they have a peculiar relation to him, as his Representatives, the *Ministers of his Kingdom*, the main instruments of his Providence, whereby he conveyeth his favours, and dispenseth his justice to men; because also the good

good of mankind, which he especially tendereth, is mainly concerned in their welfare; whereas, I say, *it is he that giveth salvation unto Kings; that giveth great deliverance to his King, and sheweth mercy to his anointed; that hath the King's heart, and his breath, and all his ways in his hand*: even upon this account our Prayers for them are the more required. For it is a method of God, and an established rule of Divine Providence, not to dispense special Blessings without particular Conditions, and the concurrence of our duty in observance of what he prescribeth in respect to them. Seeing then He hath enjoyed, that in order to our obtaining those great Benefits, which issue from his special care over Princes, we should pray for it, and seek it from his hands; the omission of this duty will intercept it, or bereave us of its advantages; nor in that case may we expect any blessings of that kind. As without praying for our selves, we must not expect private favours from Heaven; so without praying for our Prince, we cannot well hope for publick blessings. For, as a profane person (who in effect disavoweth God, by not regarding to seek his favour and aid)

Psal. 144. 10.
& 21. 1.
Psal. 18. 50.
(63. 11.)
2 Sam. 22.
51.
Prov. 21. 1.
Dan. 5. 23.

Ezr. 8. 22.

Liv. 5. 51.

Hor. Od. 3. 6.

aid) is not qualified to receive any good from him : so a profane Nation (which disclaimeth God's Government of the world, by not invoking his Benediction on those who moderate it under him) is not well capable of common benefits. It is upon all accounts true which Ezra said, *The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him : but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.* If therefore we desire that our Prince should not lose God's special regard, if we would not forfeit the benefits thereof to our selves, we must conspire in hearty Prayers for him.

10. To engage and encourage us in which practice, we may farther consider, that such Prayers, offered duly, (with frequency and constancy, with sincerity and zeal,) do always turn to good account, and never want good effect: the which if it be not always easily discernible, yet it is certainly real; if it be not perfect as we may desire, yet it is competent, as expediency requireth, or as the condition of things will bear.

There may be impediments to a full success of the best Prayers; they may not ever prevail to render Princes completely

pleatly good, or extreamly prosperous : for some concurrence of their own will is requisite to produce their Vertue, God rarely working with irresistibile power, or fatal efficacy ; and the state of things, or capacities of persons, are not always fitly suited for prosperity. Yet are not such Prayers ever wholly vain or fruitless : for God never prescribeth means unavailable to the end ; he never would have commanded us particularly to pray for Kings, if he did not mean to bestow a good issue to that practice.

And, surely, he that hath promised to hear all requests with faith, and sincerity, and incessant earnestness presented to him, cannot fail to hear those which are of such consequence, which are so agreeable to his will, which do include so much honesty and charity. In this case, surely, we may have some confidence, according to that of S. John, *This is the confidence we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.* 1 Joh. 5. 14.

As the good Bishop, observing S. Austin's Mother, with what constancy and passionateness she did pray for her Son, being then engaged in ways of error and

Fieri non potest, ut filius istarum lacrymarum pereat. Aug. Conf. 4. 12.

and vanity, did encourage her, saying, *It is impossible that a Son of those devotions should perish*: so may we hopefully presume, and encourage our selves, that a Prince will not miscarry, for whose welfare many good people do earnestly solicit; *Fieri non potest, ut Princeps istarum lacrymarum pereat.*

Jam. 5. 16.

You know in general the mighty efficacy of Prayer, what pregnant assurances there are, and how wonderfull instances thereof occur in Holy Scripture, both in relation to publick and private blessings: How it is often promised, that *All things, whatsoever we shall ask in prayer, believing, we shall receive*;

Matt. 21. 22.

and that *whoever asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened*: How the

Matt. 7. 8.

Gen. 20. 17.

prayer of *Abraham* did heal *Abimelech*, and his family of barrenness; how the

Num. 11. 2.

& 21. 7—.

(Ps. 106. 30.

O. T.)

Josh. 10. 12.

1 Sam. 1.

10—.

Luk. 4. 25.

Jam. 5. 17,

18.

1 King. 17.

21, 22.

prayers of *Moses* did quench the fire, and cure the bitings of the fiery Serpents; how the prayer of *Joshua* did arrest the Sun; how the prayer of *Hannah* did procure *Samuel* to her, as his name doth import; how *Elias* his prayers did open and shut the heavens; how the same Holy Prophet's prayer did reduce a departed Soul, and that of *Eli-*

sha

He did effect the same, and that of another Prophet did restore *Jeroboam's* withered hand; how the prayers of God's people frequently did raise them up *Saviours*, and when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, he delivered them out of their distresses; how the prayers of * *Asa* discomfited a million of *Arabians*, and those of *Jehoshaphat* destroyed a numerous army of his enemies by their own hands, and those of *Hezekiah* brought down an Angel from heaven to cut off the *Assyrians*, and those of *Manasses* restored him to his Kingdom, and those of *Esther* saved her people from the brink of ruine, and those of *Nehemiah* inclined a Pagan King's heart to favour his pious design for re-edifying *Jerusalem*, and those of *Daniel* obtained strange visions and discoveries; how * *Noah*, *Job*, *Daniel*, *Moses* and *Samuel* are represented as powerfull intercessours with God, and consequently it is intimated, that the great things atchieved by them were chiefly done by the force of their prayers.

And seeing Prayers in so many cases are so effectual, and work such miracles; what may we hope from them in this, wherein God so expressely and particularly

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larly

2 King. 4.
 33—
 1 King. 13. 6.
 Deuter. 4.
 29—
 Neh. 9. 27.
 Psal. 106. 44.
 & 107. 6, 13,
 19, 28.
 Jud. 3. 15. &
 4. 3. & 6. 7.
 & 10. 12.
 * 2 Chr. 14.
 11—
 2 Chr. 20. 3,
 — 12, 23.
 2 Chr. 32. 20,
 21.
 2 Chr. 33. 12,
 13.
 Esth. 4. 16.
 Neh. 1. 11. &
 2. 4.
 Dan. chap. 2.
 4. 5. 7. 8. 9.
 10. 11. 12.
 * Ezek. 14.
 14.
 Jer. 15. 1.

larly directeth us to use them? If our Prayers can so much avail to our personal and private advantage, if they may be very helpfull to our friends; how much shall the Devotions of many good men, all levelled at one mark, and aiming at a publick most considerable good, be prevalent with the Divine goodness? However, if God be not moved by Prayers to convert a Prince from all sin, to make him doe all the good he might, to bless him in all matters; yet he may thence be induced to restrain him from much evil, to keep him from being worse, or from doing worse then otherwise would be; he may dispose him to doe many things well, or better then of himself he would doe; he may preserve him from many disasters otherwise incident to him: which will be considerable effects of Prayer.

II. I shall adde but one general Consideration more, which is this, That Prayer is the onely allowable way of redressing our case, if we do suffer by, or for Princes.

Are they bad, or do they misdemean themselves in their administration of government and justice? we may not by
any

any violent or rough way attempt to reclaim them; for they are not accountable to us, or liable to our correction. *Where the word of a King is, there is power: and who shall say to him, What doest thou?* was the Preacher's doctrine. Eccles 8. 4.

Do they oppress us, or abuse us? do they treat us harshly, or cruelly persecute us? we must not kick against them, or strive to right our selves by resistance. For, *Against a King (saith the Wise man) there is no rising up:* and, *Who (saith David) can stretch out his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?* and, *They (saith S. Paul) that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation.* Prov. 30.31. 1 Sam. 26.9. Rom. 13. 2.

We must not so much as ease our stomach, or discharge our passion, by railing or inveighing against them. For, *Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people,* is a Divine law; and, *to * blaspheme, or revile dignities,* is by S. Peter and S. Jude reprehended as a notable crime. Exod. 22.28. Act. 23. 5. * 2 Pet. 2.10. Jude 8.

We must not be bold or free in taxing their actions. For, *Is it fit, saith Elihu, to say to a King, Thou art wicked, and to Princes, Ye are ungodly?* and, *to reproach the footsteps of God's Anointed,* is implied to be an impious practice. Job 34. 18. Psal. 89. 51.

Jude 16.

We must forbear even complaining and murmuring against them. For, *Murmurers* are condemned as no mean sort of offenders; and the *Jews* in the wilderness were sorely punished for such behaviour.

Eccles 10.

20.

(Isa. 8. 21.)

We must not (according to the *Preacher's* advice) so much as *curse them in our thought*; or not entertain ill conceits, and ill wishes in our minds toward them.

To doe these things is not onely high presumption in regard to them, (inconsistent with the dutifull affection and respect which we owe to them,) but it is flat impiety toward God, and an invasion of his Authority; who alone is *King of Kings*, and hath reserved to himself the prerogative of judging, of rebuking, of punishing Kings, when he findeth cause.

These were the misdemeanours of those in the Late Times, who in stead of Praying for their Sovereign, did clamour and rail at him, did asperse him with foul Imputations, did accuse his proceedings, did raise Tumults, and levy War against him, pretending by rude force to reduce him unto his Duty; so usurping on their Prince, or rather on
God

God himself, assuming his right, and taking his work out of his hands; discovering also therein great profaneness of mind, and distrust of God's Providence; as if God, being implored by Prayer, could not, or would not, had it been needfull, without such irregular courses, have redressed those evils in Church or State, which they pretended to feel, or fear.

Nothing therefore in such cases is left to us for our remedy or ease, but having recourse to God himself, and seeking relief from his hand in his good time, by converting our Prince, or directing him into a good course; however comforting our selves in the conscience of submitting to God's will.

This is the onely method S. Paul did prescribe, even when Nero, a most vile, flagitious man, a sorry and naughty Governour as could be, a monstrous Tyrant, and most bloody Persecutour, (the very inventer of Persecution,) did sway the Empire. He did not advise Christians to stand upon their

Absit enim ut indignè feramus ea nos pati quæ operamur, aut ultionem à nobis aliquam machinemur, quam à Deo expectamus.

Tert. ad Scap. 2.

Qui non dicam Regum, sed omnium hominum, & vel bestiarum sordidissimus, dignus existit qui persecutionem in Christianos primus inciperet.

Sulp. Sev. 2. 40.

guard, to contrive plots, to provide arms, to raise mutinies and insurrections against him ; but to offer supplications , prayers , and intercessions for him , as the best means of their security, and comfort. And this was the course of the Primitive Christians , during their hard condition under the domination of Heathen Princes, impugners of their Religion : *Prayers and Tears* were then the onely *Arms of the Church* ; whereby they long defended it from ruine, and at last advanced it to most glorious prosperity.

Indeed, if, not assuming the liberty to find fault with Princes, we would practise the duty of seeking God for his blessing on their proceedings ; if, forbearing to scan and censure Acts of State , we would earnestly implore God's direction of them ; if, leaving to conceive disgusts, and vent complaints about the state of things, we would assiduously petition God for the settlement of them in good order ; if, instead of being shrewd Politicians, or smart

Ita nos magis oramus pro salute Imperatoris, ab eo eam postulantes qui prestare potest. Et utique ex disciplina patientie Divina agere nos, satis manifestum esse vobis potest, cum tanta hominum multitudo, par penè major civitatis cujusque, in silentio & modestia agimus. Tert. ad Scap. 2.

Fundendo sanguinem, & patiendo magis quàm faciendo contumelias, Christi fundata est Ecclesia ; persecutionibus crevit, &c.

Hier. Ep. 62.

smart Judges in such matters, we would be devout Oratours and humble Solicitors at the Throne of grace ; our endeavours surely would find much better effect toward publick advantage : we certainly might doe more good in our closets by a few hearty wishes uttered there, then by all our tattling or jangling Politicks in corners.

There are great contrivances to settle things ; every one hath his model of State, or method of Policy, to communicate for ordering the State ; each is zealous for his own conceit, and apt to be displeased with those who dissent from him : but it is, as the fairest and justest, so the surest and likeliest way of reducing things to a firm composure , (without more a-doe, letting the world alone to move on its own hindges, and not impertinently troubling our selves or others with the conduct of it,) simply to request of Almighty God , the Sovereign Governour and sole Disposer of things, that he would lead his own Vicegerents in the management of the charge by himself committed to them.

Be carefull for nothing ; but in every Phil. 4. 6.
thing, by prayer and supplication with
thanksgiving, let your requests be made

known to God, is a rule very applicable to this case.

As God's Providence is the onely sure ground of our confidence, or hope for the preservation of Church and State, or for the restitution of things into a stable quiet: so it is onely our hearty Prayers, joyned with a consciencious observance of God's Laws, whereby we can incline Providence to favour us. By them alone we may hope to save things from sinking into disorder, we may allwage the factions, we may defeat the machinations against the publick welfare.

12. Seeing then we have so many good arguments and motives inducing to pray for Kings, it is no wonder, that, to back them, we may also allege the practice of the Church, continually in all times performing this duty in its most Sacred Offices, especially in the celebration of the Holy Communion.

Const. Apost.

8. 13.

2. 57.

S. Paul indeed, when he saith, *I exhort first of all, that prayers be made*, doth chiefly impose this Duty on Timothy, or supposeth it incumbent on the Pastours of the Church, to take special care, that Prayers be made for this purpose, and offered up in the Church joynt-

joyntly by all Christians :
and accordingly, the ancient
Christians, as *Tertullian* doth
assure us, did always pray
for all the Emperours, that
God would grant them a long
life, a secure reign, a safe
family, valiant armies, a
faithfull senate, a loyal peo-
ple, a quiet world, and what-
ever they as Men, or as Em-
perours, could wish. Thus
(addeth he) even for their
Persecutours, and in the ve-
ry pangs of their sufferings,
they did not fail to practise.
Likewise of the Church in his time
S. Chrysostome telleth us, that
all Communicants did know
how every day, both at even
and morning, they did make
supplication for all the world,
and for the Emperour, and for
all that are in authority.

And in the Greek Liturgies, (the
composition whereof is fathered on
S. Chrysostome,) there are divers Pray-
ers interspersed for the Emperours,
couched in terms very pregnant and re-
spectfull.

1 Tim. 2. 8.

Polycarp. ad Philip. c. 12.

*Precantes sumus semper
pro omnibus Imperatoribus
vitam illis prolixam, impe-
rium securum, domum tu-
tam, exercitus fortes, se-
natum fidelem, populum pro-
bum, orbem quietum, qua-
cunque hominis & Caesaris
vota sunt.*

Tert. Apol. cap. 30.

*Hoc agite, boni Praefules,
extorquete animam Deo sup-
plicantem pro Imperatore.*

Ibid.

*Καὶ οὕτω ἵστασιν οἱ μὴ-
σαι, πῶς καὶ ἐν ἑκάστῳ ἡ-
μέραν γίνεῃ καὶ ἐν ἑσπέρῃ καὶ
ἐν πρωΐᾳ· πῶς ὑπὲρ πα-
ντὸς τοῦ κόσμου, καὶ βασιλέων,
καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐν ὑποστάσει
οὐρανῶν, πνεύματι καὶ ἀλήθειᾳ.*

Chryf. in 1 Tim. 2. 1.

If

If the Offices of the *Roman Church*, and of the Churches truckling under it, in latter times, shall seem more defective or sparing in this point of service; the reason may be, for that a superlative regard to the *Solar* or *Pontifical Authority* (as Pope *Innocent III.* distinguished) did obscure their devotion for the *Lunar* or *Regal Majesty*. But our Church hath been abundantly careful, that we should in most ample manner discharge this Duty; having in each of her Holy Offices directed us to pray for our King in expressions most full, hearty, and lively.

She hath indeed been charged as somewhat lavish or over-liberal of her Devotions in this case. But it is a good fault, and we little need fear over-doing in observance of a Precept so very reasonable, and so important; supposing that we have a due care to joyn our heart with the Church's words, and to the frequency of Prayers for our Prince do confer a futable fervency. If we be not dead, or meerly formal, we can hardly be too copious in this kind of Devotion; reiteration of words can doe no harm, being accompanied with renovation of our desires. Our Text it
self

self will bear us out in such a practice ; the Apostle therein by variety of expression appearing solicitous, that abundance of Prayers for Kings should be offered in the Church , and no sort of them omitted.

There are so many General Inducements to this Duty at all times ; and there are beside divers Particular Reasons enforcing it now, in the present state and posture of things.

Times of trouble, of danger, of fear, of darkness and perplexity, of distraction and distress, of guilt, and deserved wrath, are most seasonable for recourse to the Divine help and mercy in Prayer.

And are not Ours such? are they not much like to those of which the *Psalmist* saith, *They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course?* or like those of which our Lord spake, when there was upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which were coming on the earth?

Psal. 145. 18—. & 18. 6.
& 77. 2. & 86. 7. & 118. 5.
& 142. 1—. & 107. 6—.
Jam. 5. 13. 2 *Chr.* 6. 36—.
In ops Senatus auxilii humani ad deos populum ac vota vertit.— *Liv.* 3. 7. & 5. 16.

Luk. 21. 25,
26.
(2 *King.* 19.
3.)

Are

Are not the days gloomy, so that no humane providence can see far, no wisdom can descry the issue of things?

Is it not a very unsettled world, wherein all the publick frames are shaken almost off the hinges, and the minds of men extremely discomposed with various passions; with fear, suspicion, anger, discontent and impatience? How from dissensions in Opinion do violent factions and feuds rage; the hearts of men boiling with fierce animosities, and being exasperated against one another, beyond any hopes or visible means of reconciliation?

Are not the fences of Discipline cast down? is there any conscience made of violating Laws? is not the dread of Authority exceedingly abated, and all Government overborn by unbridled licentiousness?

How many Adversaries are there, bearing ill will to our Sion? how many turbulent, malicious, crafty spirits, eagerly bent, and watching for occasion to subvert the Church, to disturb the State, to introduce confusion in all things? how many Edomites, who say of Jerusalem, (both Ecclesiastical and Civil,) *Down with it, down with it even to the ground?*

Have

Have we not great reason to be fearful of God's just displeasure, and that heavy judgments will be poured on us for our manifold hainous provocations, and crying Sins; for the prodigious growth of Atheism, Infidelity, and Profaneness; for the rife practice of all Impieties, Iniquities, and Impurities, with most impudent boldness, or rather with outrageous insolence; for the extream Dissoluteness in manners, the gross Neglect or contempt of all Duties, the great Stupidity and coldness of people generally as to all concerns of Religion; for the want of Religious Awe toward God, of Charity toward our neighbour, of Respect to our Superiours, of Sobriety in our conversation; for our Ingratitude for many great Mercies, and Incorrigibleness under many fore Chastisements, our Insensibleness of many plain Warnings, loudly calling us to repentance?

Is not all the world about us in combustion, cruel Wars raging every-where, and Christendom weltring in blood? and although at present, by God's mercy, we are free, who knows but that soon, by God's justice, the neighbouring flames may catch our houses?

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In fine, is not our case palpably such, that for any good composure or re-instatement of things in good order, for upholding Truth and sound Doctrine, for reducing Charity and Peace, for reviving the spirit of Piety, and bringing Vertue again into request, for preserving State and Church from ruine, we can have no confidence or reasonable hope, but in the good Providence and mercifull succour of Almighty God; *beside whom there is no Saviour; who alone is the hope of Israel, and Saviour thereof in time of trouble?* we now having great cause to pray with our Lord's Disciples in the storm, *Lord, save us, we perish.*

Upon such Considerations, and others whereof I suppose you are sufficiently apprehensive, we now especially are obliged earnestly to pray for our King, that God in mercy would preserve his Royal Person, and inspire his Mind with Light, and endue his Heart with Grace, and in all things bless him to us, *to be a repairer of our breaches, and a restorer of paths to dwell in; so that under him we may lead a quiet life in all godliness and honesty.*

I have done with the First Duty,
(Pray-

(*Prayer for Kings*,) upon which I have the rather so largely insisted, because it is very seasonable to our present condition.

II. The Other (*Thanksgiving*) I shall but touch, and need not perhaps to doe more. For,

I. As to general Inducements, they are the same, or very like to those which are for Prayer; it being plain, that what-ever we are concerned to pray for, when we want it, that we are bound to thank God for, when he vouchsafeth to bestow it. And if common Charity should dispose us to resent the Good of Princes with complacence; if their Welfare be a publick benefit; if our selves are interested in it, and partake great advantages thereby; if in equity and ingenuity we are bound to seek it; then, surely, we are much engaged to thank God, the bountifull donour of it, for his goodness in conferring it.

2. As for particular Motives, suiting the present Occasion, I need not by information or impression of them farther to stretch your patience; seeing you cannot be ignorant or insensible of the grand

grand Benefits by the Divine Goodness bestowed on our King, and on our selves, which this day we are bound with all gratefull acknowledgment to commemorate. Wherefore in stead of reciting trite stories, and urging obvious reasons, (which a small recollection will suggest to you,) I shall onely request you to joyn with me in the practice of the Duty, and in acclamation of praise to God. Even so

1. King. 1. 48. Blessed be God, who hath given to us so Gracious and Benign a Prince, (the experiments of whose Clemency and Goodness no history can parallel,) to sit on the throne of his Blessed Father, and renowned Ancestours.

Psal. 18. 46. — 89. 22, 23. Blessed be God, who hath protected him in so many encounters, hath saved him from so many dangers and snares, hath delivered him from so great troubles.

Psal. 98. 2 — Blessed be God, who in so wonderful a manner, by such miraculous trains of Providence, did reduce him to his Country, and re-instate him in the possession of his Rights; thereby vindicating his own just Providence, *declaring his salvation, and openly shewing his righteousness in the sight of all people.*

Blessed



Blessed be God, who in Him and with Him did restore to us our ancient good constitution of Government, our Laws and Liberties, our Peace and Quiet; rescuing us from lawless Usurpations and tyrannical Yoaks, from the insultings of Errour and Iniquity, from horrible Distractions and Confusions.

Ever blessed be God, who hath *turned the captivity of Sion*; hath raised our Church from the dust, and re-established the sound Doctrine, the decent Order, the wholesome Discipline thereof; hath restored true Religion with (II. 30. 20---) its supports, advantages and encouragements.

Blessed be the Lord, who hath granted us to continue these sixteen years in the peaceable fruition of those Blessings.

Praised be God, who hath not cast out our prayer, nor turned his mercy from us. Psal. 66. 20.

Praised be God, who hath turned our heaviness into joy, hath put off our sack-cloath, and girded us with gladness. 30. 11.

Let our mouth speak the praise of the Lord; and let all flesh bless his holy Name for ever and ever. 145. 21.

The Lord liveth, and blessed be our Rock; and let the God of our salvation be exalted. 18. 46.

Dd

Blessed

Pl. 72. 18, 19.

*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who
only doeth wondrous things; and blessed
be his glorious Name for ever; and let
the whole earth be filled with his glory.
Amen and Amen.*

Psal. 106. 48.

41. 13.

89. 52.

68. 34—

1 Chron. 16.

8—36.

*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from
everlasting to everlasting: and let all the
people say, Amen. Praise ye the Lord.*

The



The Eleventh Sermon.

On Novemb.
5. 1673.

PSAL. 64. 9, 10.

And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

IF we should search about for a Case parallel to that which we do now commemorate, we should, perhaps, hardly find one more patly such, then is that which is implied in this Psalm: and if we would know the Duties incumbent on us in reference to such an Occasion, we could scarce better learn them other-where then in our Text.

With attention perusing the Psalm, we may therein observe, That its great Authour was apprehensive of a desperate Plot by a confederacy of wicked and spitefull enemies, with great craft

D d 2, and

- and secrecy, contrived against his safety.
- Verf. 5. *They, saith he, encourage themselves in an evil matter ; they commune of laying snares privily ; they say , Who shall see them ? That for preventing the blow threatned by this design, (whereof he had some glimpse, or some presumption, grounded upon the knowledge of their implacable and active malice,) he*
- Verf. 2. *doth implore Divine protection : Hide me, saith he, from the secret counsell of the wicked, from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity. That he did confide in God's mercy and justice for the seasonable defeating , for the fit avenging*
- Verf. 7. *their machination : God, saith he, shall shoot at them with an arrow ; suddenly shall they be wounded. That they should themselves become the detectours of their crime, and the instruments of the exemplary punishment due thereto:*
- Verf. 8. *They , addeth he, shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves : all that see them shall flee away.*

Such was the Case ; the which unto what passage in the history it doth relate, or whether it belongeth to any we have recorded, it may not be easie to determine. Expositours commonly do refer it to the designs of *Saul* upon *David's*

David's life. But this seeming purely conjecture, not founded upon any express words, or pregnant intimations in the text, I shall leave that inquiry in its own uncertainty. It sufficeth to make good its pertinency, that there was such a mischievous conspiracy, deeply projected, against *David*; (a very great personage, in whose safety the publick state of God's people was principally concerned; he being then King of *Israel*, at least in designation, and therefore in the precedent Psalm, endited in *Saul's* time, is so styled;) Psalm. 63. 11. from the peril whereof he by the special Providence of God was rescued, with the notable disappointment and grievous confusion of those who managed it. The which Case (at least in kind, if not in degree) beareth a plain resemblance to that which lieth before us.

And the Duties which upon that occasion are signified to concern people then, do no less now sort to us; the which, as they lie couched in our Text, are these: 1. *wisely to consider God's doing*; 2. *to fear*; 3. *to declare God's work*; 4. *to be glad in the Lord*; 5. *to trust in God*; 6. *to glory*. Of which the

First Three are represented as more generally concerning men ; the others as appertaining more peculiarly to righteous and upright persons.

These Duties it shall be my endeavour somewhat to explain and press, in a manner applicable to the present case, I call them Duties ; and to warrant the doing so, it is requisite to consider, that all these particulars may be understood in a double manner, either as declarative of event, or as directive of practice upon such emergencies.

When God doth so interpose his hand, as signally to check and confound mischievous enterprises ; it will be apt to stir up in the minds of men an apprehension of God's special Providence, to strike into their hearts a dread of his Power and Justice, to wring from their mouths suitable declarations and acknowledgments ; and particularly then good men will be affected with pious joy, they will be encouraged to confide in God, they will be moved to glory, or to express a triumphant satisfaction in God's proceedings. These events naturally do result from such providential occurrences ; for production of these events such occurrences are purposely

purposely designed; and accordingly (where men are not by profane opinions or affections much indisposed) they do commonly follow.

But yet they are not proposed simply as Events, but also as matters of Duty: for men are obliged readily to admit such impressions upon their minds, hearts, and lives, from the special works of Providence; they are bound, not to cross those natural tendencies, not to frustrate those wise intents of God, aiming at the production of such good dispositions and good practices: whence if those effects do not arise, as often notoriously they do not in some persons, men thereby do incur much guilt and blame.

It is indeed ordinary to represent matter of duty in this way, expressing those practices consequent in effect, which in obligation should follow, according to God's purpose, and the nature of causes ordered by him. As when, for instance, God in the Law had prescribed Duty, and threatned sore punishment on the disobedient, it is subjoyned, *And all the people shall hear, and fear, and doe no more presumptuously*: the meaning is, that such exemplary punishment is in

Deut. 17. 13.
& 13. 11. &
19. 20.

its nature apt, and its design tendeth to produce such effects, although not ever, questionless, with due success, so as to prevent all transgression of those laws. So also, *When* (saith the Prophet) *thy judgments are in the land, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*: the sense is, that Divine judgments in themselves are instructive of Duty, it is their drift to inform men therein, and men ought to learn that lesson from them; although in effect divers there be, whom no judgments can make wiser or better; such as those of whom in the same Prophet it is said, *The people turneth not unto him that smiteth them*; and in another, *In vain have I smitten your children, they received no correction*. As therefore frequently otherwhere, so also here this kind of expression may be taken chiefly to import Duty. To begin then with the First of these Duties.

Isa. 26. 9.

Isa. 9. 13.

Jer. 2. 30.

& 5. 3.

Neh. 9. 29.

וְשִׁכַּח
וְשָׁחַח
συνέχεον τὰ
παθήματα.

I. We are upon such occasions obliged *wisely to consider* (or, as the Greek rendreth it, *συνέχεαι, to understand, or, to perceive*, as our Old Translation hath it) *God's doing*. This I put in the first place, as previous in nature, and influential

ential upon the rest : whence (although in the *Hebrew* it be knit to the rest, as they all are to one another, by the conjunctive particle *ve, and, yet*) we do translate it causally, *for they shall wisely consider, for they shall perceive* ; because indeed without duly considering, and rightly understanding such occurrences to proceed from God, none of the other acts can, or will be performed : attentive consideration is needfull to beget knowledge and perswasion, these to breed affection and practice.

There are many who, in such cases, are no-wise apprehensive of God's special Providence, or affected with it ; because they do not consider, or do not consider wisely and intelligently.

Some are very inobservant and careless in regard to things of this nature ; so drowzy and heedless, as not to attend to what-ever passeth, or to mind what God acteth in the world : such as those of whom the Prophet saith, *The Isa. 5. 12. harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine are in their feasts ; but they regard not the work of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands* ; that is, their minds are so amused by wanton divertisements, their hearts are so immersed in sensual enjoy-
Psal. 28. 3.
& 10. 4.

enjoyments, as no-wise to observe the most notable occurrences of Providence.

Others, (although they do ken and regard what is done, as matter of news, or story, entertaining curiosity and talk, yet) out of sloth or stupidity, do little consider it, or study whence it springeth; contenting themselves with none, or with any superficial account, which fancy or appearance suggesteth: like beasts, they do take in things obvious to their sense, and perhaps stand gazing on them; but do not make any carefull reflexion, or inquiry into their original causes and reasons; taking (as a dog, when he biteth the stone flung at him, or as a child that is angry with the log he falleth on) what-ever appeareth next, to be the principal cause: such as the Psalmist again toucheth, when he saith,

Psal. 92. 6. *A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this: and as he doth acknowledge himself on one occasion*

Psal. 73. 22. *to have been; So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee.*

Others pretend to consider much, and seem very inquisitive; yet (being misguided by vain prejudices, or foul affections) do not consider wisely, or well

well understand these matters; the result of their care and study about them being to father them on wrong causes, ascribing them to the meer conduct and agency of visible causes, hurried by a necessary swindle, or rolling on by a casual fluctuation of things; not describing God's hand in them, but profanely discarding and disclaiming it: such as those in the Psalms, who so reflected on Providence, as to say, *How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most high? The Lord doth not see, neither doth the God of Jacob regard it:* Psal. 73. 11. Psal. 94. 7. & 10. 11. such as hath been the brood of Epicurean and profane considerers in all times, who have earnestly plodded, and strained their wits, to exclude God from any inspection or influence upon our affairs.

Some indeed there have been so very dull and stupid, or so perverse and profane, as not to discern God's Hand, when it was *made bare, raised up, and stretched out* in the achievement of most prodigious works; not to read Providence, when set forth in the largest and fairest print: such as those of whom 'tis said in the Psalm, * *Our fathers will not see, understood not thy wonders in Egypt;* Isa. 52. 10. Exod. 14. 8. Deut. 26. 8. Isa. 26. 11. Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see, &c. *Psal. 106. 7. and

and those of whom 'tis observed in the
 Joh. 12. 37. Gospel, *Though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not:*
 such as the mutinous people, who, al-
 Num. 16. 32, though they beheld *the earth swallowing*
 35, 41. *up Corah with his complices, and a fire*
from the Lord consuming the men that
offered incense; yet presently did fall a-
 charging *Moses and Aaron*, saying, *Ye*
have killed the people of the Lord. No
 wonder then, if many do not perceive
 the same Hand, when it is wrapp'd up
 in a complication with inferiour causes;
 when it is not lifted up so high, or so
 far extended in miraculous performan-
 ces.

The special Providence of God in
 events here effected or ordered by him,
 is indeed commonly not discernible
 without good judgment and great care;
 it is not commonly impressed upon e-
 vents in characters so big and clear, as
 to be legible to every eye, or to any
 eye not endued with a sharp perspicu-
 cy, not applying an industrious heed-
 fulness: the tracts thereof are too fine
 and subtile to be descried by a dimme
 sight, with a transient glance, or upon
 a gross view: it is seldome so very con-
 spicuous, that persons incredulous, or
 any-

any-wise indisposed to admit it, can easily be convinced thereof, or constrained to acknowledge it: it is often (upon many accounts, from many causes) very obscure, and not easily discernible to the most sagacious, most watchfull, most willing observers. For, the instruments of Providence being free agents, acting with unaccountable variety, nothing can happen which may not be imputed to them, with some colourable pretence. Divine and humane influences are so twisted and knit together, that it is hard to sever them. The manner of Divine efficacy is so very soft and gentle, that we cannot easily trace its footsteps. God designeth not commonly to exert his hand in a notorious way, but often purposely doth conceal it. Whereas also it is not fit to charge upon God's special hand of Providence any event, wherein special ends of wisdom or goodness do not shine; it is often hard to discover such ends, which usually are wrapp'd in perplexities; because God acteth variously, (according to the circumstances of things, and the disposition, capacity, or state of objects,) so as to doe the same thing for different ends, and different things for the
the

the same end : because there are different ends, unto which Providence in various order and measure hath regard, which our short and narrow prospect cannot reach : because God, in prosecution of his ends, is not wont to proceed in the most direct and compendious way ; but windeth about in a large circuit, enfolding many concurrent and subordinate designs : because the expediency of things to be permitted or performed doth not consist in single acts or events, but in many conspiring to one common end : because we cannot apprehend the consequences, nor balance the conveniencies of things in order to good ends : because we are apt to measure things by their congruity to our opinions, expectations, and affections : because many proceedings of God depend upon grounds inaccessible to our apprehension ; such as his own secret Decrees, the knowledge of mens thoughts, close purposes, clandestine designs, true qualifications and merits ; his prescience of contingent events, and what the result will be from the combination of numberless causes : because sometimes he doth act in methods of wisdom, and by rules of justice, surpassing

passing our capacity to know, either from the finiteness of our nature, or the feebleness of our reason, or the meanness of our state, and circumstances here: because also the Divine administration of affairs hath no compleat determination or final issue here; that being reserved to the great day of reckoning and judgment. It is farther also expedient, that many occurrences should be puzzling to us, to quash our presumption, to exercise our faith, to quicken our industry, to engage us upon adoring that wisdom which we cannot comprehend. Upon such accounts, for such causes, (which time will not give me leave to explain and exemplify) the special Providence of God is often cloudy, is seldom so clear, that without great heed and consideration we can perceive it. But however to doe so is plainly our duty; and therefore possible.

For our Reason was not given us to be idle upon so important occasions; or that we should be as brute Spectators of what God doeth. He, surely, in the Governance of his noblest creature here discovereth his Being, and displayeth his Attributes: we therefore
care-

Pfal. 50. 1.
& 60. 6. &
62. 11.

carefully should observe it. He thereby (and no otherwise in a publick way) doth continually *speake*, and signifie to us his mind : and fit it is, that we his subjects should hear, should attend to the least intimations of his pleasure. To him thence glory should accrue, the which who but we can render? and that we may render it, we must know the grounds of it. In fine, for the support of God's Kingdom, for upholding the reverence due to his administration of justice among us, it is requisite, that by apparent dispensation of recompences Duty should be encouraged, and disobedience checked : very foolish therefore we must be, if we regard not such dispensations.

So Reason dictateth, and Holy Scripture more plainly declareth our obligation to consider, and perceive God's doings. To doe so is recommended to us as a singular point of wisdom : *Who so is wise, and will observe these things, they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.* Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth. *Who is wise? and he*

Psal. 107. 43.

Jer. 9. 24.

Hos. 11. 9.

he shall understand these things ; prudent ? and he shall know them. For the ways of the Lord are right, &c. We are vehemently provoked thereto : *Understand, ye brutish among the people ; and, ye fools, when will ye be wise ?* They are reprov'd for neglect and defaultance, who do not regard the work of the Lord, nor the operation of his hand. The not discerning Providence is reproach'd as a piece of shamefull folly ; *A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand : and of wofull pravity ;* * *O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the skie ; but how is it that ye cannot discern this time ?* To contemplate and study Providence is the practice of Good men. *I will meditate on all thy works,* saith the Psalmist, chiefly respecting works of this kind : and, *The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.* It is a fit matter of Devotion, warranted by the practice of good men, to implore God's manifestation of his Justice and Power this way. *O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thy self ; lift up thy self, thou Judge of the earth.* It is God's manner hereby to notifie himself. *The Lord is known by the judg-*

Psal. 94. 8.

Psal. 28. 5.
& 10. 4.
Isa. 5. 12.

Psal. 92. 6.

(Isa. 26. 11.)

Lord, when
thy hand is
lifted up, they
will not see.

* Luk. 12. 36.
Matt. 16. 3.

Psal. 77. 12.
& 143. 5.

Psal. 111. 2.

Psal. 94. 1, 2.

Psal. 9. 16.

ment that he executeth. He for this very purpose doth interpose his Hand, *Pfal. 109. 27. that men may know that it is his Hand, and that the Lord hath done it ; that (as* *Isa. 41. 20. it is in Esay) they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, (Ezek. 7. 27.) that the Hand of the Lord hath done this,*

God thereby doth support and encourage good men.

He doth thereby convince and confound ill men. *Pfal. 9. 19, 20.*

He thereby doth instruct all men. *Isa. 26. 9.*

and the Holy one of Israel hath created it. He manageth things so, that men may be brought to know, may be induced to acknowledge his authority, and his equity in the management there-

Pfal. 59. 13. of ; that they may know, that he whose *& 83. 18. Name is Jehovah, is the most High over* *& 67. 2. all the earth ; that they may say, Verily*

Pfal. 58. 11. there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth the earth. In fine, the knowledge of God's special Providence is frequently represented as a mean of nourishing our faith and hope in him, as a ground of thankfulness and praise to him, as an incentive of the best affections (of holy joy, and humble fear, and hearty love) toward him : wherefore we ought to seek it, and we may attain it.

There are consequently some distinctive marks or characters, by which we may

may perceive God's Hand : and such may these be which follow, (drawn from the special nature, manner, adjuncts, and consequences of events :) upon which may be grounded Rules declarative of special Providence, such as commonly will hold ; although sometimes they may admit exceptions, and should be warily applied.

I. The wonderfull Strangeness of Events, compared with the ordinary course of things, or the natural influence of causes : when effects are performed by no visible means ; or by means disproportionate, unsutable, repugnant to the effect. Sometimes great exploits are atchieved, mighty forces are discomfited, huge structures are demolished, designs backed with all advantages of wit and strength are confounded, none knows how, by no considerable means that appear ; Nature rising up in arms against them ; panick fears seising on the abettors of them ; dissensions and treacheries springing up among the actours ; sudden deaths snatching away the principal instruments of them. As, when *the stars in their* Judg. 5. 20.
courses fought against Sisera : when the Aug. de Civ.
winds and skies became auxiliaries to D. 5. 26.

- 1 Sam. 7. 10. *Theodosius* : when the Lord thundred
 2 Sam. 22. with a great thunder upon the Philistines,
 14, 15. and discomfited them, and they were smit-
 2 King. 7. 6. ten before Israel : when the Lord made
 Psal. 53. 5. the host of Syrians to hear a noise of
 &c 48. 6. chariots, of horses, of a great host ;---
 whence they arose and fled : when the
 2 Chron. 20. children of Ammon and Moab stood up
 23. against the inhabitants of mount Seir,
 utterly to slay and destroy them ; and
 when they had made an end of the inha-
 bitants of Seir, every one helped to de-
 2 King. 19. stroy another : when the Angel of the
 35. Lord went out, and smote in the camp
 of the Assyrians 185000 men ; and when
 they arose early in the morning, behold
 they were all dead corpses : when the
 mighty power of Antiochus was, as it is
 Dan. 8. 25. said, to be broken without hands : and
 Dan. 2. 45. when, as it is foretold, a stone, cut out of
 the mountain without hands, should break
 in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the
 silver, and the gold. Such Events do
 speak God to be their cause, by his in-
 visible efficacy supplying the defect of
 apparent means.

*Vid. Artabani Orat. apud
 Herod. Polymn. pag. 246.
 Hom. H. ̄. ver. 688.*

So likewise, when by
 weak forces great feats are
 accomplished, and impoten-
 cy triumpheth over might:
 when

when (as the Prophet saith) *the captives of the mighty are taken away, and the prey of the terrible is delivered*: when *One man* (as is promised) *doth chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight*: when *a stripling, furnished onely with faith and a pebble, shall knock down a monstrous Giant, armed with a helmet of brass and a coat of mail, with a huge target, sword and spear: when successes arrive like those recorded in Scripture under the conduct of *Joshua, Gideon, Jonathan, Asa, Jehosaphat*; wherein very small forces, by uncouth means, did subdue formidable powers: This doth argue that God doth interpose, * *with whom* (as it is said) *it is all one to save by many, or by few, and those that have no power*; whose power is perfected in weakness; who breaketh the arm of the wicked, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty, and delivereth the poor from him that is too strong for him.

Also, when great policy and craft do effect nothing, but are blasted of themselves, or baffled by simplicity: when cunningly-laid designs are soon thwarted and overturned: when most perspicacious and profound counsellours are

Isa. 49. 25.

Josh. 23. 10.

Lev. 25. 8.

Deut. 32. 30.

* 1 Sam. 17.

5, 40.

Judg. 7. 7.

1 Sam. 14.

6. —

2 Chron. 14.

11. —

& 20. 12, 17.

* 2 Chron.

14. 11.

1 Sam. 14. 6.

2 Cor. 12. 9.

Job 12. 21.

& 38. 15.

Psal. 10. 15.

& 37. 17.

& 35. 10.

(Psal. 76. 5.)

Hom. Ods.

4. vers. 11.

2 Sam. 15. 31.

Ruffinus,
S. Paul,
d' Ancre,
de Luna, &c.

Isa. 44. 25.

Job 5. 12, 13.
(Ps. 33. 10.)

βαλὼν πολυ-
πλόκων ἐξέ-
στην.

1 Cor. I. 27,
28.

so blinded, or so infatuated, as to mistake in plain cases, to oversee things most obvious and palpable : when profane, malicious, subtle, treacherous Politicians (such as *Abimelech, Achitophel, Aman, Sejanus, Stilico, Borgia*, with many like occurring in story) are not only supplanted in their wicked contrivances, but dismally chastised for them : These occurrences do more then insinuate Divine wisdom to intervene, countermining and confounding such devices. For he it is who (as the Scripture telleth us) *maketh the diviners mad; turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprize; taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and turneth down the counsell of the froward headlong.*

When-ever a just cause, or honest design, without any support or succour of worldly means, (without authority, power, wit, learning, eloquence,) doth against all opposition of violence and art prevail : this signifieth him to yield a special countenance and aid thereto, who (to depress humane pride, and advance his own glory) *hath chosen the foolish*

foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are: (that are with us in most request and esteem.)

Again, when plots, with extream caution and secrecy contrived in darkness, are by improbable means, by unaccountable accidents disclosed and brought to light: *a bird of the air* (as Eccles 10. 20. the *Wise man* speaketh) *telling the matter*; *the stones in the wall* (as it is in Hab. 2. 11. the Prophet) *crying out Treason*. The King cannot sleep; to divert him the Chronicle is called for; *Mordecai's* service is there pitched on; an inquiry is made concerning his recompence; honour is decreed him: so doth *Aman's* cruell device come out. Pity seiseth on a pitileſs heart toward one among a huge number of innocents devoted to slaughter; that he may be saved, a Letter must be sent; in that, words inserted suggesting the manner of execution; that carried to the wise King, who presently smelleth it out: so This day's Plot was discovered. Such events, whence

can they well proceed, but from the
 (Pſ. 121. 4.) all-piercing and ever-watchfull care of
 Job 34. 21. him, *whose eyes (as Elihu ſaith) are up-
 on the ways of man, and he ſeeth all his
 Job 34. 22. goings?* There is no darkneſs, nor ſhadow
 of death, where the workers of iniquity
 Job 26. 6. ſhall hide themſelves : For Hell is naked
 Pſal. 132. before him, and deſtruction hath no co-
 2, &c. vering.
 Heb. 4. 13.
 Am. 9. 2.

Alſo, when ill men by their perverſe
 wilineſs do notably befool and enſnare
 themſelves, laying trains to blow up
 their own deſigns, involving themſelves
 in that ruine and miſchief into which
 they ſtudied to draw others ; as when
 1 Sam. 18. 25. *Saul*, expoſing *David's* life to hazzard,
 encreaſeth his honour ; when the *Per-
 ſian* Nobles, incenſing the King againſt
Daniel, do occaſion his growth in fa-
 Dan. 6. 24. vour, with their own deſtruction ; when
Aman, by contriving to deſtroy God's
 people, doth advance them, and rearing
 a gallows for *Mordecai*, doth prepare it
 for himſelf : when it happeneth accord-
 ing to thoſe paſſages in the Pſalms,
 Pſal. 10. 2. *The wicked are taken in the devices that
 & 9. 15. they imagined ; In the net which they hid
 & 35. 8. is their own foot taken ; He made a pit
 & 140. 5. and digged it, and is fallen into the
 Pſal. 7. 15. ditch which he made ; His miſchief ſhall
 & 57. 6. return
 Pſal. 7. 16.
 Pſal. 5. 10.*

return upon his own head, and his violent dealings shall come upon his own pate: These are pregnant evidences of God's just and wise Providence: for, The Lord Psal. 9. 2.
is known by the judgment that he executeth; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hand.

All such occurrences, containing in them somewhat, if not downrightly miraculous, yet very admirable, in like manner deflecting from the stream of humane affairs, as miracles do surmount the course of nature, most reasonably may, most justly should be ascribed to the special operation of him, who *onely* Psal. 72. 18. & 86. 10.
doeth wonderfull things.

2. Another character of special Providence is, the Seasonableness, and Suddenness of Events. When that which in it self is not ordinary, nor could well be expected, doth fall out happily, in the nick of an exigency, for the relief of innocence, the encouragement of goodness, the support of a good cause, the furtherance of any good purpose; (so that there is occasion to acknowledge with the Prophet, *Thou didst terrible* Isa. 64. 3.
things, that we looked not for:) This is a shrewd indication, that God's Hand is then concerned; not onely the event
 being

being notable, but the connexion thereof with circumstances of need being more admirable.

Thus in time of distress and despondency, when a man is utterly forlorn, and destitute of all visible relief, when
 Psal. 142. 4. (as the Psalmist speaketh) *refuge faileth him, and no man careth for his soul;*
 (Psal. 44. 25. & 108. 12.)
 * Heb. 4. 16. if then * *Unzipp & Bon Deia, an opportune succour* doth arrive; he is then unreasonable, and ingratefull, if he doth not avow a special Providence, and thankfully ascribe that event unto him who is
 Psal. 46. 1. *our refuge and strength, a very present*
 & 9. 9. & 44. *help in trouble;* * *a strength to the poor, a*
 24— & 37. *strength to the needy in his distress, a re-*
 39. & 27. 5. *fuge from the storm, a shadow from the*
 & 69. 14. & 18. 6. *heat;* || *the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in time of trouble.* This is that,
 * Isa. 25. 4. & 33. 2. for which in the 107. Psalm the Divine
 || Jer. 14. 8. Goodness is so magnificently celebrated;
 Job 33. 18. this is the burthen of that pathetical
 Psal. 107. 8, 15, 21, 31. rapture, wherein we by repeated wishes and exhortations are instigated to bless God; his wonderfully relieving the children of men in their need and distress: this is that, which God himself in the Prophet representeth as a most satisfactory demonstration of his Providence.
 Isa. 41. 17, &c. *When the poor and needy seek water, and there*

there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst ; I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Jacob will not forsake them : I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys, &c. That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the Hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy one of Israel hath created it.

So also, when pestilent enterprizes (managed by close fraud, or by impetuous violence) are brought to a head, and come near to the point of being executed ; the sudden detection, or seasonable obstruction of them, do argue the ever-vigilant Eye, and the all-powerfull Hand to be engaged. God ever doth see those deceitfull workers of iniquity, laying their mischief in the dark ; he is always present at their cabals, and clandestine meetings, wherein they brood upon it. He often doth suffer it to grow on to a pitch of maturity, till it be thoroughly formed, till it be ready to be hatched, and break forth in its mischievous effects ; then in a trice he snappeth and crusheth it to nothing. God beholdeth violent men setting out in their unjust attempts, he letteth them proceed on in a full career, untill they

- they reach the edge of their design; then instantly he checketh, putteth in a spoak, he stoppeth, he tumbleth them down, or turneth them backward. Thus was *Aman's* plot dashed, when he had procured a Royal Decree, when he had fixed a time, when he had issued forth letters to destroy God's people.
- Esth. 3. Thus was *Pharaoh* overwhelmed, when he had just overtaken the children of *Israel*. Thus were the designs of *Abimelech*, of *Absalom*, of *Adonijah*, of *Sanballat* nipped. Thus when *Sennacherib* with an unmatchable host had encamped against *Jerusalem*, and had to appearance swallowed it, God did put a hook into his nose, and turned him back in-
- 2 King. 19. 28. to his own land. Thus when *Antiochus* was marching on furiously, to accomplish his threat of turning *Jerusalem* into a charnel, a noisom disease did intercept his progress. Thus when the profane *Caligula* did mean to discharge his bloody rage on the *Jews*, for refusing to worship him, a domestick sword did presently give vent to his revengefull breath. Thus also, when *Julian* had by his policy and his authority projected
- 2 Mac. 9. 4. to overthrow our Religion, his plot soon was quashed, and his life snapped away
- Chrysost. in Babylam, Orat. 2.
Naz. Orat. 4.

away by an unknown hand. Thus, *when-ever the enemy doth come in like a flood*, (threatning immediately to overflow, and overturn all things,) *the Spirit of the Lord doth lift up a standard against him*; that is, God's secret efficacy doth suddenly restrain and repress his (Job 38.11.) outrage. This usually is the method of Divine Providence. God could prevent the *beginnings of wicked designs; he could supplant them in their first onsets; he could any-where sufflamine and subvert them: but he rather winketh for a time, and suffereth the designers to goe on, till they are || mounted to the top of confidence, and good people are cast on the brink of ruine; then * *ἀπὸ μηχανῆς*, surprisingly, unexpectedly he striketh in with effectual succour: so declaring how vain the presumption is of impious undertakers; how needfull and sure his protection is over innocent people; how much reason the one hath to dread him, and the other to confide in him. Then is God seen, then his care and power will be acknowledged, when he snatcheth us from the jaws of danger, when *our Soul* Psal. 124.7. *doth scape as a bird out of the snare of the fowler.*

* Εἰς τὴν ἐκ-
αρχήν,
μὴδ ἐνθῆκεν,
ἐξ οὗ αὐτῶ
τοῦτον, &c.
Vid. Chryl.
ad Olymp.

|| ὅταν κορυ-
φωθῇ, ὅταν
ἀνέξῃ, &c.
Ibid.

* Nec Deus
interfit, nisi
dignus vindi-
ce nodus In-
ciderit.

3. Another character of special Providence is, the great Utility and Beneficialness of Occurrences, especially in regard to the publick state of things, and to great personages, in whose welfare the publick is much concerned. To entitle every petty chance that arriveth to special Providence, may signify lightness; to father on God the mischiefs issuing from our sin and folly, may favour of profaneness: but to ascribe every grand and beneficial event unto his good Hand, hath ever been reputed wisdom and justice. * *It hath been* (saith *Balbus* in *Cicero*) *a common opinion among the ancients, that what-ever did bring great benefit to mankind, was never done without Divine goodness towards men.* And well might they deem so, seeing to doe so is most agreeable to his nature, and appertaining to his charge; and may appear to be so by good argumentation *a priori*. For, that God doth govern our affairs, may be deduced from his essential Attributes; and, consequently, that he doth in especial manner order these things, which are the most proper and worthy objects of his governance. God indeed doth not disregard any thing; he watcheth over

*Magna dii
curant, par-
va negligunt.
Cic. 2. de
N. D.*

* *Quicquid
magnam uti-
litatem gene-
ri adferret
humano, id
non sine Di-
vina bonitate
erga homines
per arbitra-
bantur. Cic.
de Nat. Deor.
lib. 2.*

over the least things by his general and ordinary Providence ; so that nothing in nature may deviate from its course , or transgress the bounds prescribed to it.

He thereby *cloatheth the grass of the field*; Matt. 6. 30.
He provideth for the raven his food, and Psal. 104. 14.
the young lions seek their meat from him ; Psal. 147. 9.
*without his care * a sparrow doth not fall* Job 38. 39.
to the ground ; by it all the hairs of our Psal. 164. 21.
head, are numbred. *Mat. 10. 29, 30.

But his more special hand of Providence is chiefly employed in managing affairs of great moment and benefit to mankind ; and peculiarly those which concern his people, who do profess to worship and serve him ; whose welfare he tendreth with more then ordinary care and affection.

He therefore hath a main stroke in all revolutions and changes of State : he presideth in all great counsels, and undertakings ; in the waging of war, in the settlement of peace ; in the dispensation of victory and good success. He is peculiarly interested in the protection of Princes, the chief *Ministers of his* Dan. 4. 25.
Kingdom ; and in preservation of his Psal. 75. 7.
Psal. 46. 9.
Prov. 21. 31.
1 Chron. 29. 11.

people, the choice object of his care , from violent invasions, and treacherous surprises ; so as to prevent disasters incident, or to deliver from them. *It is*
he Sap. 6. 4.

Psal. 144. 10. *he that (as the Psalmist saith) doth*
 Eccles 10. 20. *give salvation unto Kings ; who deliv-*
 Psal. 18. 50. *eth David his servant from the hurtfull*
 & 21. 1. & 33. 16. *sword. It is he that continually * keepeth*
 *Psal. 121. 4. *Israel without ever sleeping, or slumbring ;*
 Jer. 14. 8. *who is the hope of Israel, and the Savi-*
 Psal. 46. 5. *our thereof ; who is in the midst of her,*
that she shall not be moved ; who hath
 Psal. 94. 14. *declared, that he will help her, and that*
right early ; that he will not cast off his
 Isa. 54. 17. *people, nor forsake his inheritance ; that*
 Psal. 3. 8. *no weapon formed against his Church shall*
prosper ; that salvation belongeth to the
Lord, and his blessing is upon his people.
 When therefore any remarkable event ;
 highly conducing to the publick good
 of Church, or State, (supporting them
 in a good condition, or rescuing them
 from imminent danger,) doth appear,
 it is most reasonable and most just, to
 ascribe the accomplishment thereof to
 God's Hand. When any pernicious en-
 terprize, levelled against the safety of
 Prince and people, is disappointed, it
 is fit we should profess and say, *The*
 Psal. 129. 4. *righteous Lord hath hewen the snares of*
 (O. T.) *the ungodly in pieces.*

4. Another like mark of special Pro-
 vidence is, the Righteousness of the case,
 or the Advantage springing from Events
 unto

unto the maintenance of Right, the vindication of Innocence, the defence of Truth, the encouragement of Piety and Vertue. God naturally is the Judge of right, the Guardian of innocence, the Patron of truth, and Promoter of goodness. *The Lord is a refuge to the oppressed: He is a Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widow: He will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor: * He executeth righteousness, and judgment for all that are oppressed: He bleſseth the righteous, and compasseth him with favour as with a shield: He preserveth the souls of the righteous, and delivereth them out of the hand of the ungodly: All his paths are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.* When-ever therefore Right is oppressed, or perillously invaded; when Innocence is grossly abused, or sorely beset; when Piety is fiercely opposed, or cunningly undermined; when good men for the profession of Truth, or the practice of Vertue, are persecuted, or grievously threatned with mischief: then may we presume that God is not unconcerned, nor will prove backward to reach forth his succour. And when accordingly we find that sig-

Psal. 9. 9.
Psal. 58. 5.
Psal. 10. 14.
Job 36. 15.
Psal. 14. 12.
*Psal. 103. 6.
& 9. 8.
Psal. 5. 12.
Psal. 97. 10.
& 37. 12—
Psal. 25. 10.
146. 6.

nal aid or deliverance do then arrive, it is most reasonable to suppose, that God particularly hath engaged himself, and exerted his power in their behalf. For, seeing it is his proper and peculiar work, seeing it most becometh and becometh him to appear in such cases, affording his helpfull countenance; when he doth it, we should be ready to acknowledge it. In such a case, *The hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies*, saith the Prophet.

5. Another character is, the Correspondence of Events to the Prayers and desires of good men. For seeing it is the duty, and constant practice of good men, in all exigencies to implore God's help; seeing such Prayers have, as S. James telleth us, a mighty energy, it being God's property, by them to be moved to impart his powerfull assistance; seeing God most plainly and frequently hath declared, and obliged himself by promise, that he will hear them, so as to perform what-ever is expedient in their behalf; seeing we have many notable experiments recorded in

2 Chron. 14. 11. & 20. 9.
& 32. 20. 2 King. 19. 15.
1 King. 17. 1. &c.

Scripture (as those of *Asa, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, Elias, Daniel,*

Daniel, and the like) of Prayers bringing down wonderfull effects from Heaven, with which the testimonies of all times, and the daily experience of good men do conspire; seeing the presumption of such efficacy is the main ground and encouragement of Devotion: we have great reason, when-

Πόσαι μυριάδες ἀνδρῶν
καὶ φάλαγγες, ὅσαι ἐκεί-
νους μόνον ἡμεῖς, καὶ Θεὸς
βελανθεὶς κατεγάρτατο;

Naz. Orat. 4.

How many myriads and
squadrons of men were there,
whom we onely praying and
God willing discomfired?
saith Nazianzene in refe-
rence to the defeating of Ju-
lian's design.

ever Events are answerable to such Prayers, to ascribe the performance of them to God's Hand: great reason we have in such cases to cry out with *David*, *Now know I that the Lord saveth* Psal. 20. 6.
his anointed; he will hear him from his Holy heaven, with the saving strength of his right hand: just cause have we, according to his pattern, thankfully to acknowledge God's favour in answering our petitions; *The King (said he) shall* Psal. 21. 1, 2;
joy in thy strength, O Lord, and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoyce? For Psal. 30. 2. &
thou hast given him his heart's desire, and 65. 17— &
hast not withholden the requests of his 118. 5.
lips.

6. Again, The proceedings of God (especially in way of judgment, or of dispensing rewards and punishments)

F f 2

discover

Ἐκκοσίων κα-
κῶν ἀκόσια
ἐκγονα. Da-
masc.

Τῆς κολάσε-
ως ὁ τρόπος
ἡ ἀμύνη καὶ
τὸ πᾶν μιμε-
ται. Chrys.
ἀνδρ. 19.

discover their original by their Kind and countenance, which usually do bear a near resemblance, or some significant correspondence to the actions upon which they are grounded. *Punishments* (saith a Father) *are the forced offsprings of willing faults*: and answerably, Rewards are the children of good deeds: and God, who formeth both, doth commonly order it so, that the children in their complexion and features shall resemble their parents. So that the defects of men shall often be legible in the recompences conferred, or inflicted on them: not according to the natural result of their practice, but with a comely reference thereto; apt to raise in them a sense of God's Hand, and to wring from them an acknowledgment of his Equity in so dealing with them. So when humble Modesty is advanced to honour, and ambitious Confidence is thrown into disgrace; when Liberality is blessed with encrease, and Avarice is cursed with decay of estate; when Craft incurreth disappointment, and Simplicity findeth good success; when haughty Might is shattered, and helpless Innocence is preserved; when the Calumnious tongue is blistered, the *Flat-*
tering

tering lips are cut off, the Blasphemous throat is torn out; when bloody Oppressours have *bloud given them to drink*, Rev. 16. 6. and come to welter in their own gore; (an accident which almost continually doth happen;) when Treacherous men by their own confidents, or by themselves are betrayed; when Retaliations of vengeance are ministred, extorting confessions like to that of *Adoni-bezek*, *As I have done, so God hath requited me*; deserving such exprobrations, as that of *Samuel to Agag*, *As thy sword* 1 Sam. 15. *bath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women*; grounding such reflexions as that concerning *Antiochus*, *Thus the murtherer and blasphemous* 2 Macc. 9. *having suffered most grievously, as he entreated other men, so died he a miserable death*: By such Occurrences the finger of God doth point out and indicate it self; they speak themselves immediately to come from that just God, who doth ἀνταποδίδωαι, render to men answerably to their doings; who payeth men their due, sometimes in value, often in specie, according to the strictest way of reckoning. He (as the Prophet saith) *is great in counsel, and mighty in work: for his eyes are open to all* Jer. 32. 19.

- the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruits of his doings.* This indeed is a sort of administration most conformable to God's exact justice, and most conducive to his holy designs of instructing and correcting offenders. He therefore hath declared it to be his way.
- Psal. 62. 12. *It is* (saith the Prophet, directing his speech to the instruments of Divine vengeance upon Babylon) *the vengeance of the Lord: take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, doe unto her.* And,
- Jer. 50. 15. 51. 49. *The day of the Lord* (saith another Prophet concerning the like judgment upon Edom) *is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy reward shall return upon thine own head.* Thereby doth God mean to declare himself the Judge, and Governor of men: For, *I will*, saith he in
- Ezek. 35. 15. *Ezekiel, doe unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am the Lord.* Farther,
- Ezek. 7. 27. Job 34. 11.

7. Another argument of special Providence is, the Harmonious conspiracy of various Accidents to one End or effect. If that one thing should hit advantageously to the production of some considerable

derable Event, it may with some plausibility be attributed to Fortune, or common Providence: yet that divers things, having no dependence, or coherence one with the other, in divers places, through several times, should all joyn their forces to compass it, cannot well otherwise then be ascribed to God's special Care wisely directing, to his own Hand powerfully wielding those concurrent instruments to one good purpose. For it is beside the nature, it is beyond the reach of Fortune, to range various causes in such order. Blind Fortune cannot apprehend or catch the seasons and junctures of things, which arise from the motions of causes in their nature indifferent and arbitrary: to it therefore no such event can reasonably be imputed. So to the bringing about our Lord's Passion, (that great Event, which is so particularly assigned to God's Hand,) we may observe the monstrous Treachery of *Judas*, the strange Maliginity of the *Jewish* Rulers, the prodigious Levity of the people, the wonderfull Easiness of *Pilate*, with other notable accidents, to have jumped in order thereto. So also that a malicious Traitour should conceive kindness to-

— α κ τ τ τ
Θ ε ο υ
π α ν τ ο ς
ε ν ε ρ γ ε ι α
σ η ε ι α , τ α υ τ
ε ρ ω μ ε ν α ν τ α
δ ι κ ν ο τ α τ η
ν ι σ τ ω . Euseb.
lib. I. de Vir.
Const. de Max-
imino (sub
finem.) Is
oculos qui e-
ruerat Chri-
stianis, ipse
visu orbatum.

ward any, that he should be mistaken in the object of his favour, that he should express his mind in a way subject to deliberate examination, in terms apt to breed suspicion where the Plot was laid; that the Counsellours should despise it, and yet not smother it; that the King instantly, by a light darted into his mind, should descry it: these things so happily meeting, may argue God (who mouldeth the hearts, who guideth the hands, who enlightheth the minds of men) to have been engaged in the detection of This day's black Conspiracy.

Such are some characters of special Providence: each of which singly appearing in any occurrence, would in a considerate man breed an opinion thereof; each of them being very congruous to the supposition of it; no such appearances being otherwise so clearly and cleverly explicable, as by assigning the Divine Hand for their principal cause. But the connexion of them all in one Event (when divers odde accidents do befall at a seasonable time, according to exigency for the publick benefit, the preservation of Princes, the security of God's people, the protecti-

on

*Vid. Diod.
Sic. lib. 15.
p. 482.*

on of right, the maintenance of truth and piety, according to the wishes and prayers of good men, with proper retribution and vengeance upon the wretched designers of mischief; such a complication, I say, of these marks in one Event) may thoroughly suffice to raise a firm persuasion, to force a confident acknowledgment concerning God's Providence, in any considerate and ingenuous person: it readily will dispose such persons upon any such occasion to say, *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.* Psal. 118. 23.

Notwithstanding therefore any obscurity or intricacy that sometime may appear in the course of Providence, notwithstanding any general exceptions that may by perverse incredulity be alleged against the conduct of things, there are good marks observable, whereby (if we are not very blockish, drowsy, supine, lazy, or froward; if we will consider wisely, with industrious attention and care, with minds pure from vain prejudices, and corrupt affections) we may discern and understand God's doing. Which to doe is the First Duty specified in our Text: upon which having insisted so largely, I shall
(hoping

Εἰ μὴ σημεῖα
καὶ θαύματα,
ἀλλ' εἰκό-
τα σημείους
περὶ μαλα,
δειγματὰ τῆ
τοῦ Θεοῦ σοφ-
νοίας, καὶ ἀντι-
λήψεως ἀ-
φ' αὐτοῦ. Chrys.
ad Olymp. Ep.
1.

(hoping you will favour me with a little patience) briefly touch the rest.

II. It is the Duty of us all, upon such remarkable occurrences of Providence, to *fear God*: *All men*, 'tis said, *shall fear*. It is our Duty in such cases to be affected with all sorts of fear; with a fear of awfull dread, with a fear of hearty reverence, with a fear of sober caution; yea, sometimes with a fear of dejecting consternation. When God doth appear

Job 37. 22--
& 13. 11. of awfull dread, with a fear of hearty
Psal. 52. 6. reverence, with a fear of sober caution;
& 68. 35. yea, sometimes with a fear of dejecting
Dan. 6. 26. consternation. When God doth appear

Isa. 59. 17. *clad with his robes of vengeance and zeal*, denouncing and discharging judgment;

Exod. 15. 11. when he representeth himself *fearfull in*
Psal. 66. 3, 5. *praises, terrible in his doings toward the*
(130. 3.) *children of men, working terrible things in righteousness*; it should strike into our hearts a dread of his glorious Majesty, of his mighty Power, of his severe

Dent. 28. 58. Justice, of *his glorious and fearfull Name*:
& 10. 17. it should instill into our minds a reverence of his excellent Wisdom, his exceeding Goodness, his perfect Holiness: it should breed in our Souls a solicitous care of displeasing and provoking him: it should cause us in our hearts to shake and tremble before him. Then is that

Isa. 66. 2. of the Psalmist to be put in practice,
Psal. 33. 8. *Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the*
inhabi-

inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. Tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob. Such dispensations are in their nature declarative of those Divine Attributes which do require such affections: they are set before our eyes to cast us into a very serious and solemn frame; to abash, and deterr us from offending, by observing the danger of incurring punishments like to those which we behold inflicted upon presumptuous transgressours; upon those who do haينously violate Right, or furiously impugn Truth, or profanely despise Piety; who earnestly prosecute wicked enterprises; who persecute the friends of God with outrageous violence, or treacherous subtlety. Upon infliction of such punishments, *All the people shall hear, and fear, and doe no more presumptuously,* saith God himself, declaring the nature and drift of them. They do plainly demonstrate, that there is no presuming to escape being detected in our close machinations by God's All-seeing Eye; being defeated in our bold attempts by God's All-mighty Hand; being sorely chastised for our iniquity by God's impartial Judgment. Extreamly blind and

Psal. 114. 7.

Deut. 17. 13.

& 13. 11.

& 19. 20.

Hos. 11. 10.
Amos 3. 6, 8.

Nah. 1. 5.

Jer. 10. 10.

Psal. 104. 32.

& 18. 7. & 76.

8. & 143. 2.

Job 26. 11.

(Isa. 64. 3.

Ezek. 21. 10.

Isa. 25. 3.

& 59. 18,

19.)

and stupid therefore must we be, or monstrously sturdy and profane; if such experiments of Divine Power and Justice do not awe us, and fright us from sin. *When the Lion roareth, who will not fear? when the trumpet is blown in the city, shall not the people be afraid? Shall he, at whom the mountains quake, and the hills melt; whose indignation the nations are not able to abide; at whose wrath the earth doth shake and tremble; at whose reproof the pillars of heaven are astonished; shall he visibly frown, shall his wrath flame out, shall he shake his rod of exemplary vengeance over us, and we stand void of sense or fear? If so, then surely a brutish dotage, or a Gigantick stoutness doth possess us.*

III. We are in such cases obliged to *declare God's work*: that is, openly to acknowledge and avow, to applaud and celebrate the special Providence of God, with his adorable perfections displayed in such Events; to the glory of God's Name, in expression of our reverence and gratitude toward him, for the common edification of men; for which uses they greatly serve, to which purpo-

purposes they are designed. We should not view such providential occurrences, like dumb beasts, with a dull or careless silence, as if we did not mind them, or were not concerned in them : we should not suppress or stifle the knowledge of them in our breasts, as if they were barely matters of private consideration and use : we should not let our observation and resentment of them be fruitless, so as to yield no honour to God, no benefit to man. But we should propagate and convey them into others : in so loud a tone, in so lively a strain we should vent them, as thereby to excite the notice, to enflame the affections of all men within the reach of our voice ; provoking them to conspire with us in acknowledgment of God's Power and Wisdom, in acclamation to his Justice and Goodness. This is the due improvement of our *Glory* ; that peculiar excellency, wherein chiefly (except in our Reason) we do surpass all creatures ; that without which our Reason it self is more then half unprofitable ; that whereby we put our best Member to its best use. For this we have the devout Psalmist his pious Resolutions, his exemplary Performances, his zealous
Wishes,

Psal. 57. 8.

- Wishes, his earnest Exhortations to
 Psal. 145. 5, guide and move us. *I will speak of the
 6, 11. glorious honour of thy Majesty, and of thy
 (& 77. 12. wondrous works. Men shall speak of the
 & 9. 14.) might of thy terrible acts; and I will de-
 clare thy greatness. They shall speak of
 the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of
 thy power. So did he signifie his Reso-*
 Psal. 40. 10. *lution. I have not hid thy righteousness
 within my heart; I have declared thy
 faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not
 concealed thy loving-kindness and thy
 truth from the great congregation. So
 his conscience testified of his Practice.*
 Psal. 107. 8, *Oh that men would praise the Lord for
 15, 21, 22, 31. his goodness, and for his wonderfull works
 to the children of men: that they would
 offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and
 declare his works with gladness. So doth*
 Psal. 47. 1. *he pour forth his Desire. O clap your
 hands, all ye people, shout unto God with
 the voice of triumph. Sing unto the Lord,
 bless his Name: shew forth his salvation
 from day to day. Declare his glory a-*
 Psal. 96. 2, 3. *mong the heathen, his wonders among all
 people. Come and see the works of God---*
 Psal. 96. 3. *Sing forth the honour of his Name, make*
 & 105. 2. *his praise glorious. O give thanks unto
 the Lord, call upon his Name; make known
 his deeds among the people. So doth he
 summon,*

summon, so doth he urge us to this practice ; and in his deportment we may see our Duty.

IV. It is peculiarly the Duty and practice of good men upon such occasions to feel, and to express religious Joy. *The righteous shall be glad in the Lord.* Good men indeed then have great matter, and much cause, on many accounts, to be glad.

It becometh them to rejoyce, as having an universall complacence in God's proceedings, as gratefully relishing all dispensations of Providence. They, as pious, are disposed to bless and praise God for all things incident, and cannot therefore but rejoyce ; Joy being an inseparable companion of Gratitude, and Praise. Hence, *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.* Hence, *The voice of salvation and rejoycing is in the tabernacles of the righteous.* Hence, *Rejoyce in the Lord,* Psal. 97. 17. Psal. 118. 15. Psal. 33. 1. *O ye righteous : for praise is comely for the upright ;* is an exhortation backed with a very good reason.

They cannot but find satisfaction in observing God's Providence notably discovered, to the confirmation of their faith,

faith, and cherishing their hopes ; together with the conviction of infidelity, and confusion of profaneness. *Our heart (saith the Psalmist) shall rejoyce in him ; because we have trusted in his Holy Name.*
 Psal. 33. 21. *I have trusted in thy mercy, my heart shall rejoyce in thy salvation ; The righteous shall see it, and rejoyce ; and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.*
 Psal. 13. 5. *The righteous shall see it, and rejoyce ; and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.*
 Psal. 107. 42.

It is to them no small pleasure, to behold God's holy Perfections illustriously shining forth ; and the Glory of him (who is the principall object of their love, their reverence, their hope and confidence) to be conspicuously advanced. *Rejoyce, (saith the Psalmist) O ye righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. Zion heard, and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoyced, because of thy judgments, O Lord. For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth.*
 Psal. 97. 12. *Rejoyce, (saith the Psalmist) O ye righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. Zion heard, and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoyced, because of thy judgments, O Lord. For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth.*
 & 30. 4. *rejoyced, because of thy judgments, O Lord. For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth.*
 Psal. 97. 8, 9. *For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth.*
 & 48. 11.

It is to them ground of exceeding comfort, to receive so clear pledges of God's Love and Favour, his Truth and Fidelity, his Bounty and Munificence toward them, expressed in such watchfull care over them, such protection in dangers, such aid in needs, such deliverance from mischiefs vouchsafed to them.
 Such

Such Benefits they cannot receive from God's hand, without that chearfulness which always doth adhere to gratitude. I will (saith David) sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me. Because thou hast been my helper, therefore in the shadow of thy wings I will rejoyce. My lips shall greatly rejoyce in thee, and my Soul, which thou hast redeemed. I will be glad, and rejoyce in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble, and hast known my Soul in adversities. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoyce: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them —

Sen. de Benef. 2. 22.
Cum accipiendum judicaverimus, hilares accipiamus, profitentes gaudium, &c.

Vid. ib. 30.
Psal. 13. 6.

Psal. 63. 7.

Psal. 71. 23.
Psal. 31. 7.
Psal. 126. 3.
Psal. 5. 11.

They are also greatly refreshed with apprehension of the happy fruits sprouting from such dispensations of Providence; such as are the Benefit of mankind, the Peace and prosperity of the Civil State, the Preservation, settlement, enlargement, advancement of God's Church, the support of Right, the succour of Innocence, the maintenance of Truth, the encouragement and furtherance

rance of Piety; the restraint of Violence, the discountenance of Errour, the correction of Vice and impiety. In these things they, as faithfull servants of God, and real friends of goodness, as bearing hearty good will and compassion to mankind, as true lovers of their Country, as living and sensible members of the Church, cannot but rejoyce. Seeing by these things their own best interest, (which is no other then the advantage of Goodness,) their chief honour, (which consists in the promotion of Divine Glory,) their truest content, (which is placed in the prosperity of *Sion*,) are highly furthered; how can they look on them springing up without great delight and complacence? O (saith the Psalmist) *sing unto the Lord—for he hath done marvellous things—He hath remembered his mercy and truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.* And, *Sing, O heavens,* (crieth the Prophet) *and be joyfull, O earth, and break forth into singing, O ye mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy on his afflicted.* And, *When* (saith he) *ye shall see this,* (the comfort of Gods people,)

Psal. 122. 6.
 (1 Cor. 12.
 26.)

Psal. 98. 1, 3.

Isa. 49. 13.

Psal. 96. 11,
 13.

Isa. 66. 14.

people,) your heart shall rejoyce, and your bones shall flourish like an herb : and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies.

Even in the frustration of wicked designs, attended with severe execution of vengeance on the contrivers and abettours of them, they may have a pleasant satisfaction ; they must then yield a chearfull applause to Divine Justice.

The righteous (saith the Psalmist) shall Psal. 58. 10.
Job 22. 19. rejoyce when he seeth the vengeance : and,

Let the wicked (saith he) perish at the Psal. 68. 2, 3. presence of God ; but let the righteous be

glad, let them rejoyce before God, yea let them exceedingly rejoyce. Whence at

God's infliction of judgment upon Babylon, it is said in Jeremy, Then the hea- Jer. 51. 48.

ven, and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for Babylon : and at the fall

of mysticall Babylon in the Apocalyps 'tis likewise said, Rejoyce over her, thou

heaven, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets ; Apoc. 18. 25.

for God hath avenged you on her. Far-

ther,

V. The next Duty prescribed to good men in such cases is, to trust in God : that is, to have their affiance in God

(upon all such like occasions, in all urgencies of need) settled, improved, and corroborated thereby. This indeed is the proper end, immediately regarding us, of God's special Providence, disclosing it self in any miraculous, or in any remarkable way; to nourish in well-
 (Psal. 78. 7.) disposed minds that Faith in God, which is the root of all Piety, and ground of Devotion. Such experiments are sound arguments to persuade good men, that God doth govern and order things for their best advantage; they are powerfull incentives, driving them in all exigencies to seek God's help; they are most convincing evidences, that God is abundantly able, very willing, and
 Psal. 9. 10. ever ready to succour them. *They, saith the Psalmist, that know thy Name, will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee. And, I (saith he) will abide in thy tabernacle for ever; I will trust in the covert of thy wings: For thou, O God, hast heard my vows; thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.* It is, indeed, a great aggravation of diffidence in God, that having
 Psal. 34. 8. *tasted and seen that the Lord is good; having felt so manifest experience of*
 Divine

Divine goodness; having received so notable pledges of God's favourable inclination to help us; we yet will not rely upon him. As a friend, who by signal instances of kindness hath assured his good will, hath great cause of offence, if he be suspected of unwillingness in a needfull season to afford his relief: so may God most justly be displeased, when we, (notwithstanding so palpable demonstrations of his kindness,) by distrusting him, do in effect question Ecclus 2. 10. the sincerity of his friendship, or the constancy of his goodness toward us.

VI. Good men upon such occasions should *glory*: *All the upright in heart shall glory.* Should *glory*, that is, in contemplation of such Providences feeling sprightly elevations of mind and transports of affection, they should exhibit triumphant demonstrations of satisfaction and alacrity. It becometh them not in such cases to be dumpish, or demure; but jocund and crank in their humour, brisk and gay in their looks, pleasantly flippant and free in their speech; jolly and debonair in their behaviour; every way signifying the extream complacency they take in God's doing, and the

Pfal. 126.
1, &c.

full content they tast in their state. They with solemn exultation should triumph in such events, as in victories atchieved by the glorious Hand of God in their behalf, in approbation of their cause, in favour toward their persons, for their great benefit and comfort. They may (not as proudly assuming to themselves the glory due to God, but as gratefully sensible of their felicity springing from God's favour) *se-jactare, se laudibus efferre*, (as the Hebrew word doth signifie ;) that is, in a sort boast, and commend themselves as very happy in their relation to God, by virtue of his protection and aid. They may (not with a haughty insolence, or wanton arrogance, but with a sober confidence,

Pfal. 52. 6, 7.
The righteous shall—laugh at him, or deride him, in this manner; Loe, this is the man that made not God his strength—

and chearfulness) insult upon baffled impiety, by their expressions and demeanour upbraiding the folly, the baseness, the impotency, and wretchedness thereof, in competition with the wisdom, in opposition to the power of God, their friend and patron. For such carriage in such cases we have the practice and the advice of the Psalmist, to warrant and direct us. *In God, saith he, we boast all the day long, and praise thy Name for ever. Thou, Lord, hast made*

Pfal. 44. 8.

Pfal. 92. 4.

made

made me glad through thy work; and I will triumph in the works of thy hands. We will rejoyce in thy salvation; and in the Name of our God we will set up our banners. Glory ye in his holy Name: let the heart of them rejoyce that seek the Lord. Sing unto him, sing Psalms unto him; talk ye of all his wondrous works. Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy Name, and to triumph in thy praise. Such should be the result (upon us) of God's mercifull Dispensations toward his people.

I shall onely farther remark, that the word here used is by the Greek rendred *ἐπαινεθήσονται*, they shall be praised: which sense the Original will bear, and the reason of the case may admit. For such Dispensations ever do adorn integrity, and yield commendation to good men. They declare the wisdom of such persons, in adhering to God, in reposing upon God's help, in embracing such courses which God doth approve and bless: they plainly tell how dear such persons are to God; how incomparably happy in his favour, how impregnably safe under his protection; as having his infallible wisdom, and his invincible

Psal. 20. 5.

Psal. 105. 3, 2.

Psal. 106. 47.

Psal. 126. 3.
& 125. 1, & C.
& 138. 1, & C.

power engaged on their side. This cannot but render them admirable, and their state glorious in the eyes of all men; inducing them to profess with the Psalmist, *Happy is the people which is in such a case; yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.* And of such a people, that declaration from the same mouth is verified, *In thy Name shall they rejoyce all the day long, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted: For thou art the glory of their strength, and in thy favour their horn shall be exalted.*

Psal. 144. 15.
& 33. 12.

Psal. 89. 16,
17.

Such are the Duties suggested in our Text, as fitting these occasions, when God in especial manner hath vouchsafed to protect his people, or to rescue them from imminent mischiefs, by violent assault or by fraudulent contrivance levelled against them. I should apply these particulars to the present case solemnized by us: But I shall rather recommend the application to your sagacity, then farther infringe your patience, by spending thereon so many words as it would exact. You do well know the Story, which by so many years repetition hath been impressed on your minds and by reflecting thereon,

You

You will easily discern, how God, in the seasonable discovery of this execrable Plot, (the master-piece of wicked machinations ever conceived in humane brain, or devised on this side Hell, since the foundation of things,) in the happy deliverance of our Nation and Church from the desperate mischiefs intended toward them, in the remarkable protection of Right and Truth, did signalize his Providence.

You will be affected with hearty Reverence toward the gracious Authour of our Salvation, and with humble dread toward the just awarder of vengeance upon those miscreant wretches, who *digged this pit, and fell into it themselves.*

You will be ready with pious acknowledgment and admiration of God's Mercy, his Justice, his Wisdom, to declare and magnifie this notable Work done by him among us.

You must needs feel devout resentments of Joy for the Glory arising to God, and the Benefits accruing to us, in the preservation of God's Anointed, our just Sovereign, with his Royal posterity: in the freeing our Country from civill Broils, Disorders, and Confusions;

fusions ; from the yokes of Usurpation and Slavery ; from grievous Extortions and Rapines ; from bloody Persecutions and Trialls, with the like spawn of disastrous and tragicall consequences, by this Design threatned upon it : in upholding our Church (which was so happily settled, and had so long gloriously flourished) from utter ruine : in securing our profession of God's Holy Truth, the truly Catholick Faith of *Christ*, (refined from those drossy alloys, where-with the rudeness and sloth of blind Times, the fraud of ambitious and covetous designers, the pravity of sensual and profane men had embased and corrupted it,) together with a pure Worship of God, an edifying administration of God's Word and Sacraments, a comely, wholsome, and moderate Discipline, conformable to Divine prescription, and Primitive example : in rescuing us from having impious Errours, scandalous Practices, and superstitious Rites, with merciless violence obtruded upon us : in continuing therefore to us the most desirable comforts and conveniencies of our lives.

You farther considering this signal testimony of Divine Goodness, will there-

thereby be moved to hope and confide in God for his gracious preservation from the like pernicious attempts, against the safety of our Prince, and welfare of our Country; against our Peace, our Laws, our Religion; especially from *Romish* Zeal and Bigottry, (that mint of wofull factions and combustions, of treasonable conspiracies, of barbarous massacres, of horrid assassinations, of intestine rebellions, of forrein invasions, of savage tortures and butcheries, of *holy Leagues*, and *pious Frauds*, through Christendom, and particularly among us,) which as it without reason damneth, so it would by any means destroy all that will not crouch thereto.

You will, in fine, with joyous festivity glory and triumph in this illustrious demonstration of God's Favour toward us; so as heartily to joyn in those due acclamations of blessing and praise.

Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we are escaped.

*Psal. 124. 6.
(68. 32.)*

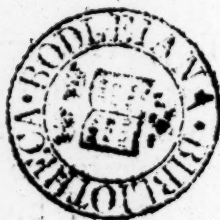
Allelujah; Salvation, and glory, and power

*Apoc. 19. 1,
2.*

*power unto the Lord our God : For true
and righteous are his judgments.*

*Apoc. 15. 3. Great and marvellous are thy works,
O Lord God Almighty ; just and true
are thy ways, O thou King of Saints.*

*Pfal. 72. 18, 19. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who
onely doeth wondrous things : And blessed
be his glorious Name for ever : and let
the whole earth be filled with his glory,
Amen, and Amen.*



The



The Twelfth Sermon.

PSAL. 132. 16.

Henry the
7th Chap-
pel, July 4.
1663. at the
Bishop of
Man his
Consecrati-
on.

*I will also cloath her Priests with sal-
vation.*

THE context runs thus: *The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, he will not turn from it, Of the fruit of thy body I will set upon thy throne. If thy children will keep my covenant, and the testimony that I shall teach them; their children also shall sit upon thy throne for evermore. For the Lord hath chosen Sion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfie her poor with bread. I WILL ALSO CLOATH HER PRIESTS WITH SALVATION, and her Saints shall shout aloud for joy. There will I make the horn of David to bud, &c.*

IF

If all, not onely Inaugurations of persons, but Dedications even of inanimate things to some extraordinary use, hath been usually attended with especial significations of joy, and festival solemnity; with great reason, the Consecration of a person to so high and sacred a Function, as that of a Christian Bishop, (that is, of a Prince, or principal Pastour in God's Church,) requires most peculiar testimonies of our gratulation and content: the face of things ought then to be serene and chearfull; the thoughts of men benign and favourable; the words comfortable and auspicious, that are uttered upon such occasion. And that ours at present should be such, the subject as well as the season of our Discourse doth require. Words few, but pregnant, and affording ample matter for our best affections to work upon: and which more particularly will engage us, both to a hearty thankfulness for past Benefits, and to a confident expectation of future Blessings; while they acquaint us with the ancient exhibition of a gracious Promise, re-mind us of the faithfull performance thereof hitherto, and assure us of its certain accomplishment for the future.

ture. The occasion whereof was this.

King *David*, moved by a devout inclination to promote God's Honour, and benefit the Church, had vowed to build a magnificent Temple, imploring God's propitious concurrence with, and approbation of his design. Whereupon Almighty God not onely declares his acceptance of that pious resolution, but rewards it with a bountifull Promise, consisting of two parts ; one conditional, relating to *David's* Children and posterity, that they in an uninterrupted succession should for ever enjoy the Royal dignity, in case they did constantly persist in observing his Covenant, and the Testimonies that he should teach them ; the other more absolute, that however, what he chiefly intended concerning God's established Worship, and the perpetual welfare of the Church, God would have an especial care that it should fully and certainly be accomplished : that he would for ever fix his residence in *Sion* ; that he would protect and prosper it, and all that did belong thereto ; especially those that did most need his favour and assistance, the Poor, the Priests, and the Saints, (or *gentle ones.*) This is briefly the importance

tance of the general Promise wherein is comprehended that particular one whereon we are to treat : and in which we may observe,

1. The Promiser, *I*;
2. The Persons who are especially concerned in the promise, *her Priests*;
3. The Thing promised, *cloathing with salvation*.

I. I say, the Promiser, *I* : that is, the Lord ; the most true , the most constant, the most powerfull God ; most true and sincere in the declaration of his purpose, most constant and immutable in the prosecution , most powerfull and uncontrollable in the perfect execution thereof : whose *words are right , and all whose works are done in truth* : who *will not break his covenant, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips* : whose *counsel shall stand , and who will doe all his pleasure*. These glorious Attributes and Perfections of his (so often celebrated in Holy Writ) do ground our reliance upon all God's promises, and do oblige us (notwithstanding the greatest improbabilities or difficulties objected) to believe the infallible performance of this.

Psal. 33. 4.

• Psal. 89. 34.

Isa. 46. 10.

II. The

II. The Persons whom the Promise mainly regards, *her Priests*. *Priests*, that is, persons peculiarly devoted to, and employed in Sacred matters; distinguished expressly from the *Poor*, (that is, other meek and humble persons;) and from the *Saints*, (that is, all other good and religious men.) And, *her Priests*; that is, the Priests of *Sion*: of that *Sion* which *the Lord hath chosen*; which *he hath desired for his* Contrā,
2 Chron. 7.
21. permanent *habitation*; which he hath resolved to *rest*, and *reside in for ever*. Whence it plainly enough follows, that the Priests and Pastours of the Christian Church are hereby, if not solely, yet principally designed. Which interpretation, because it is in a manner the foundation of our subsequent Discourse, and by some it may perhaps not be readily admitted, I shall endeavour farther to confirm by these few Arguments.

I. Because the Covenant here mentioned is not (as to the main parts thereof) of a conditional or temporary nature, but absolute and perpetual; and must therefore be understood to respect Vide
2 Chron. 7.
16. the *Christian Church*: (that of the *Jews* being long since rejected, their Temple demolished, their *Sion* utterly
H h forsa-

forſaken.) For although one particular contained therein, concerning the continual ſucceſſion of *David's* poſterity in the Regal authority over *Iſrael*, hath a condition explicitly annexed ; (and, conſequently, the effects depending upon the performance of that condition were contingent, and mutable ;) yet all the reſt of this Covenant (or Promise) is conceived in terms peremptory, and expreſſly importing perpetuity. *This is my reſt for ever*, עַד עַד, that is, (as the Greek Tranſlatours render it,) εἰς αἰῶνα ἢ αἰῶν, (*in ſeculum ſeculi*,) that is, to the end of this world ; as εἰς αἰῶνας ἢ αἰῶν denotes the end of all worlds, or the moſt perfect ſempiternity. And that it doth really in this caſe denote a proper and unlimited perpetuity, is alſo evident by thoſe explications thereof in the 89. *Psalm*, (where the very ſame Covenant is, as to ſome parts thereof, more largely recorded.)

Verſ. 35, 36, 37. *Once have I ſworn by my Holineſs, that I will not lie unto David : His ſeed ſhall endure for ever, and his throne as the Sun before me : It ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever as the Moon, and as a faithfull witneſs in heaven. No words can expreſs more fully a perpetual duration, or at leaſt*

least one co-extended with the duration of the world, then those do. And the Prophet *Jeremy*, referring also to this very Covenant, and particularly to this very clause thereof, thus expresses the matter: *Thus saith the Lord; If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night; and that there should not be day and night in their season: Then may also my Covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the Priests, my Ministers.* But farther,

2. The completion of this individual Promise is both by the Prophets foretold, and expressed by the Evangelists, to appertain to the times of the Gospel. Ye heard even now the words of *Jeremy*, which are by him applied to those times, when God would cause *the Branch* of righteousness (that is, *Jesus* of Nazareth, our Blessed Saviour) to grow up unto *David*; who should execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days (saith he farther) shall *Judah* be saved, and *Jerusalem* shall dwell safely: and this is the Name wherewith she shall be called, (or rather, which he shall be called, as not onely the Vulgar Latine

- and the Greek Interpreters, but the Chaldee also read it,) **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.** Likewise in the 55. of *Isaiah* God thus invites the Gentiles ; *Incline your ear, and come unto me ; hear, and your soul shall live : and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David :* that is, I will ratifie that everlasting Covenant, which, in your behalf, I once made with *David*, and will confer on you those favours which I faithfully promised him ; relating to this very Promise also. For both in *Solomon's Prayer*, (*2 Chron. 6.*) which in all probability was indited about the same time, and upon the same occasion with this Psalm, and in the 89. Psalm, the benefits of this same covenant are called *the mercies of David.* O Lord God, *turn not away the face of thine anointed, remember the mercies of David thy servant, saith Solomon :* and, *My mercy (saith God) will I keep with him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him :* and, *My faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him ;* that is, *my faithfull (or sure) mercy ;* *תה עֲוֹנָא מִסָּדָא*, as the *LXX*, and *S. Paul* with them in the *Acts*, render this place of *Isaiah.*
And
- Isa. 55. 3.
- 2 Chron. 6. 42.
- Psal. 89. 28.
- Vetl. 24.
- Acts 13. 34.

And in the Song of *Zachary* we have one passage of this Promise cited, and applied to the times of the Gospel: *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath visited and redeemed his people; and hath raised up a horn of salvation in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets: viz. by the mouth of this prophetic Psalmist here, where 'tis said, There will I make the horn of David to bud; and in the parallel Ps. 89. In my Name shall his horn be exalted.* To omit those many places where our Saviour, in correspondence to this Promise, is affirmed to *possess the throne of his father David, and to rule over the house of Jacob for ever.* Moreover,

Luk. i. 68,
69, 70.

Verf. 24.

Vide Luc. i.
32. edit. Cur-
cel.

3. That by the *Sion* here mentioned is not chiefly meant that material Mountain in *Judæa*, but rather that mystical Rock of Divine Grace, and Evangelical Truth, upon which the Christian Church, the onely everlasting Temple of God, is unmovably seated, is very probable, (or rather manifestly certain,) by the Prophets constant acception thereof in this sense, when they assign the character of perpetual durability thereto. As in *Isa. 60.* where he

Isa. 60. 14,
15, 16.

Mic. 4. 1.

Verf. 7.

Joel 2. 28.

3. 16.

thus prophecies of the Christian Church;
The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee The City of the Lord, The Sion of the Holy one of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken, and hated, so that no man went through thee; I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breasts of Kings, &c. And the Prophet Micah, speaking of the last days, (that is, of the Evangelical times, when the mountain of the House of the Lord should be established in the top of the mountains,) saith thus; And I will make her that halted, a remnant, and her that was cast far off, a strong nation: and the Lord shall reign over them in mount Sion from henceforth even for ever. And the Prophet Joel, speaking of the same times, (when God would pour out his spirit upon all flesh,) hath these words: So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Sion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. All which places no man can reasonably doubt, and

and all Christians do firmly consent to respect the Christian Church. To which we may adde that passage of the Author to the *Hebrews*, ch. 12. v. 22. *But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; that is, to the Christian Church.*

4. The manner of this Covenant's delivery, and confirmation by the Divine Oath, argues the inconditionate, irreversibile, and perpetual constitution thereof: for to God's most absolute and immutable Decrees this most august and solemn confirmation doth peculiarly agree. So the Apostle to the *Hebrews* seems to intimate: *Wherein (saith he)* Heb. 6. 17.
God willing more abundantly to demonstrate the immutability of his counsel,
(Ἐπιδείξαι τὸ ἀμετάθετον ἡ βουλῆς,)
interposed an oath.

We may therefore (I suppose) upon these grounds solidly and safely conclude, that this Promise doth principally belong, and shall therefore infallibly be made good to the Christian Priesthood; to those who in the Christian Church, by offering spiritual Sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, by directing and instructing the people in the know-

ledge of the Evangelical Law, by imploring for and pronouncing upon them the Divine benedictions, do bear analogy with, and supply the room of the *Jewish Priesthood*.

From which discourse we may by the way deduce this Corollary; That the title of *Priest*, although it did (as most certainly it doth not) properly and primarily signifie a *Jewish Sacrificer*, (or Slaughterer of beasts,) doth yet no-wise deserve that reproach which is by some inconsiderately, (not to say, profanely,) upon that mistaken ground, commonly cast upon it: since the Holy Scripture it self, we see, doth here, even in that sense (most obnoxious to exception) ascribe it to the Christian Pastours. And so likewise doth the Prophet *Isaiah*; *And I will also take of them for Priests and for Levites, saith the Lord*: speaking (as the context plainly declares) of the Gentiles, which should be converted and aggregated to God's Church. And the Prophet *Jeremiah*; *Neither shall the Priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to doe sacrifice continually.* Which prophecy also evidently concerns the same time and state of things;
of

Isa. 66. 21.

Jer. 33. 18.

of which the Prophet *Malachi* thus foretells: *For from the rising of the Sun* Mal. i. 11. *to the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered to my Name, and a pure offering.* It were desirable therefore, that men would better consider, before they entertain such groundless offences, or pass so uncharitable censures upon either words, or persons, or things. But I proceed to the

III. Particular, which is the Matter of the Promise, *Cloathing with salvation.* Where we may observe,

First, That the usual metaphor of being *cloathed* doth in the Sacred dialect denote a compleat endowment with, a plentiful enjoyment of, or an entire application to, that thing, or quality, with which a person is said to be cloathed. So is God himself said to be *cloa-* Psal. 93. 1. *thed with majesty and strength.* And *David* prays, that they might be *cloa-* Psal. 35. 26. *thed with shame and dishonour, that did* Psal. 109. 29. *magnifie themselves against him.* And in *Ezekiel*, *The Princes of the Isles*, being Ezek. 26. 16. *amazed by the ruine of Tyre, are said to* *cloath themselves with trembling.* And that

that bitter adversary of *David* (in *Psal.*
Verf. 18. 109.) did *cloath himself with cursing*,
as with a garment. And *Job* avoucheth
Job 29. 14. of himself, *I put on righteousness, and it*
cloathed me; my judgment was as a robe,
and a diadem. And *S. Peter* advises us
1 Pet. 5. 5. to *put on, or to be cloathed with, humili-*
ty. Finally, *Isaiah* introduces our Savi-
Isa. 61. 10. our speaking thus: *I will greatly rejoyce*
in the Lord, my soul shall be joyfull in my
God: for he hath cloathed me with the
Isa. 59. 17. *garments of salvation, he hath covered*
me with the robe of righteousness; as a
bridegroom decketh himself with orna-
ments, and as a bride adorneth her self
with her jewels. So that, (as by these
 instances we may discern) *to be cloa-*
thed with salvation, is, to be perfectly en-
 dowed therewith; to be invested with
 it as with a garment, which wholly en-
 closeth and covereth the body, so that
 no part is left unguarded and unadorned
 thereby.

Secondly, But now what is that *Sal-*
vation, with which the *Priests of Sion*
 shall be thus cloathed? I answer: *Sal-*
vation, when it is put absolutely, and
 not conjoynd with any particular ob-
 ject, (or term from which,) doth in
 the *Hebrew* language properly signifie a
 Deli-

Deliverance from, or remotion of all sorts of inconvenience; and, consequently, an Affluence of all good things; and, in effect, the same which other languages call Felicity and Prosperity, or design by terms equivalent to those: the *Hebrews* having hardly any other word so properly correspondent to those, as this word, *Salvation*. Whence that title of *Saviour*, and the *God of* ^{*Deus, σωτήρ*} *Salvation*, so often attributed to Al-^{*sapē*} *Platoni*. mighty God, imports as much as, the Dispenser of all good gifts; the great Benefactor, Assister, and Protector of men: And to *Save* is promiscuously used for, to relieve the needy, to comfort the sorrowfull; to restore the sick to his health, the prisoner to his liberty, the captive to his country; to defend the weak from injury, and the humble from contempt; to deliver the distressed from imminent danger, the innocent from unjust condemnation, the slandered from undeserved reproach: in a word, all the effects of God's Goodness and Power, the whole work of the Divine Providence and Beneficence, are hereby expressed.

We will recite one or two of those many places which confirm this notion.

Psalm

Pſalm 85. 9. Surely his Salvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land : his Salvation is nigh, that is, his loving care attends upon them, to aſſiſt and preſerve them : which in Pſal. 145. 19. is thus otherwiſe expreſſed ; He will fulfill the deſire of them that fear him; he will hear their cry, and will ſave them. And again, Pſalm 149. 4. The Lord taketh pleaſure in his people ; he will beautiſe the meek with Salvation : that is, he will by his good Providence diſpoſe them into a convenient and decent condition of life. And again, Pſalm 144. v. 10. It is he that giveth Salvation unto Kings ; that is, by whoſe gracious diſpoſal they proſper, and are preſerved in dignity, plenty, and ſafety.

I will not, by citation of places, labour to confirm ſo obvious a Notion: it may ſuffice for that purpoſe, that the ſupreme accompliſhment of all Happineſs, the enjoyment of perfect Blis in Heaven, is, in agreement with this *Jewiſh* acception of the word, moſt commonly ſtyled *Salvation*. But I muſt adde, that whereas Salvation may relate either to the outward eſtate of a man's body, life, and fortunes, or to the internal diſpoſitions of the mind ; to our preſent
con-

condition in this world , or to our future and eternal estate : it doth seem here (I say not, to exclude the latter altogether, yet) more directly and principally to respect the former, *viz.* that external and temporal welfare, which is conspicuous and visible in this world. My reason is, Because the other parts of this propheticall Promise do, in their most natural acception, signifie that outward Prosperity wherewith God would vouchsafe to bless his Church : that abundant *benediction of her store*, that *satisfying her poor with bread*, that *joyfull exultation of her Saints*, that *cloathing her enemies with shame*, being expressions properly denoting a state of external good weal and comfort ; and in consonance to them require, that we thus likewise understand this phrase ; the Priests being also questionless designed to partake in this glorious Felicity of the Church. Which is also confirmed by other Prophecies of the same tenour and intention : as particularly that in *Jer. 31.* concerning the recollection of *Israel*, and redemption of the Spiritual *Sion*, 'tis said, *I will satiate the soul of the Priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, &c.* Vers. 14.

Now

Now, although we may adventure safely to interpret the declarations of Divine favour according to the most comprehensive sense of which the words are capable, where they are conceived: (it being the manner of the immensely-Good God, to exceed rather, than to be deficient, in the performance of his word; and to surpass the expectations he hath raised in us, then any wise to disappoint them:) yet however, the least we can imagine here promised to the *Priests of Sion*, will comprehend these three things.

1. A Free and Safe condition of life: that they be not exposed to continual dangers of ruine; of miserable suffering, or remediless injury: that the benefits of peace, and law, and publick protection, shall particularly appertain to them; so that their adversaries (if any they happen to have) shall not be incited, by hope of reward or impunity, to hurt their persons, rifle their goods, disturb their quiet; but that they shall enjoy good degrees of security, liberty, and tranquillity in this world.

2. A Provision of competent subsistence for them: that their condition of
life

life be not wholly necessitous, or very penurious, destitute of convenient accommodations, or depending altogether for them upon the arbitrary benevolences of men, which is, at best, but a more plausible kind of beggary; but that they shall be furnished with such reasonable supplies, as are requisite to encourage them in the chearfull performance of their duty.

3. A Sutable degree of respect, and so high a station among men, as may commend them to general esteem, and vindicate them from contempt: that they be not reputed among the dregs and refuse of the people; that their persons be not base and despicable, their names made the objects of vulgar obloquy, their functions become prostitute to profane irrision; but that some considerable authority, some more then ordinary regard and veneration accrue unto them from the high relations which they bear, and from the sacred business which they manage.

All this at least (according to the most moderate interpretation of the phrase) that abundant *Salvation* doth imply, wherewith God hath promised to *invest the Priests of Sion*.

We

We may therefore presume, or rather not presume, but confidently rely upon, and comfort our selves in the expectation of God's faithfull continuance to fulfill this Promise. We may assure our selves, that neither the secret envy of them who repine at those encouragements which God's Providence hath conferred on his Priests, nor the open malice of those that furiously oppugn their welfare, shall ever prevail to overwhelm them with extream misery, penury, or disgrace; since no endeavour of earth or hell can ever be able to reverse this everlasting decree of Heaven, or to defeat that irresistible power which is engaged to its execution. No inferiour force can strip them naked of that Salvation, wherewith the Supreme Truth hath promised to cloath them.

Which confidence of ours may be improved, by considering the Reasons that might induce Almighty God to resolve, and promise thus favourably in behalf of his *Priests*. (For though we cannot penetrate the incomprehensible depths of the Divine Counsel, nor should ever peremptorily conclude concerning the determinate Reasons of his Actions: yet when the wisdom of his proceedings

things doth clearly approve it self to our understandings, we ought readily to acknowledge it, and humbly to praise him for it.) Now the Reasons why Divine Providence should undertake to preserve the Priesthood in safety, to procure for them liberal maintenance, and to raise them above a state of scorn and infamy; may be especially these three.

1. It concerns God's Honour.
2. The Good of the Church requires so.
3. Equity and the reason of the case exacts it.

In prosecuting which Heads of discourse; I shall not seem to you (I hope) to transgress the rules of modesty, or decency. There be certain seasons, where-in confessedly it is not onely excusable, but expedient also, to commend one's Self; as when a man is falsely accused, or unjustly afflicted. And with greater reason sometime men are allowed to praise the Country where they were born and bred, the Family to which they are allied, the Society to which they are more especially related. And if at this time I assume the like liberty, the occasion (I hope) will apologize for
I i me.

me. It becomes not me to be an adviser, much less a reprover, in this Audience: may I therefore, with your favourable permission, presume to be a commender, or (if you please) a pleader for the welfare of this Sacred Order, although my self an unworthy and inconsiderable Member thereof. I say therefore,

I. God's Honour is concerned in the safe, comfortable, and honourable estate of his Priests: and that upon account of those manifold relations, whereby they stand allied, appropriated, and devoted to himself.

They are in a peculiar manner his
 Joel 2. 17. Servants. *The servant of the Lord* (saith
 2 Tim. 2. 24. S. Paul) *must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach. The servant of the Lord*, who's that? are not all men God's servants? is not he Lord of all? Yes; but a Christian Priest, such as Timothy was, is by way of excellency so styled. All men owe subjection, obedience, and homage to God: but the Priests are (his Ὑπηρέτῃς, his Ἀεὶσπύοι) his Ministers, his Officers, his immediate Attendants, his Domesticks as it were, and menial Servants; that approach his person, that tread the courts of his house, that wear his proper badges, that

1 Cor. 4. 1.
 Rom. 15. 16.

that are employed in his particular business. And is it then for God's honour, to suffer them to be abused, to want convenient sustenance, to live in a mean and disgracefull condition? Would it not redound to the discredit of an earthly Prince, to permit, that the attendants on his Person, the officers of his Court, the executers of his Edicts should have the least injury offered them, should fare scantily or courselly, should appear in a sordid garb? are they not therefore by especial privileges guarded from such inconveniences? And shall the Great King and Lord of all the world be deemed less provident for, less indulgent (not to say less just) unto his Servants? Servants, I say, and those not of the lowest rank, nor appointed to the vilest drudgeries; but such as are employed in the most honourable charges, and are entrusted with his most especial concernments.

They are his Stewards. (*A Bishop*, Tit. 1. 7. saith *S. Paul*, *must be blameless*, as the *Steward of God*.) If the Church be *Oikos*, *God's house*, or family, * as 'tis * 1 Tim. 3. called, and the Priests the *οἰκονόμοι*, the ^{15.} Stewards of that house, the Comptrollers of that family; 'tis surely no mean

Vid. Matt.
24. 45.

I Cor. 4. 1.

Luk. 12. 42.

station they obtain therein. The distribution of his bread, (the Bread of life, his holy Word ,) and the dispensation of his most precious Goods, (the holy Mysteries,) are committed to their care and prudence. *Who then* (saith our Saviour) *is that faithfull and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season ?* Who but the Priests, who are therefore styled both Προσβήτες, ἡγούμενοι, κυβερνήσεις, (*Presidents, Guides, Rulers,*) and Ποιμένες (*Feeders or Pastours*) of the Church?

Yea they are Οἰκοδόμοι also, the Builders of that house, founding it by initial conversion, rearing it by continued instruction, covering and finishing it by sacramental oblation of Divine grace.

I Cor. 3. 10.

As a wise architect, (saith S. Paul) I have laid the foundation , and another builds upon it.

I Cor. 3. 9.

They are Συνεργοὶ Θεοῦ, *Co-operators with God* ; that manage his business, and drive on his designs: the Solicitors of his affairs ; the Masters of his requests : * his Heralds , that publish his Decrees, denounce his Judgments, proclaim his Pardons, and acts of grace unto his subjects ; that blazon his titles,

* Κήρυκες.

and

and defend his rightfull authority in the world: yea, his Ministers of State; the Ministers (I say, *absit invidia,*) of his most glorious Spiritual Kingdom; (which is peculiarly denominated *the Kingdom of God* ;) the orderly administration of which, its advancement, its preservation, and its enlargement, are especially commended to their diligence and fidelity.

They are, lastly, God's * *Embassadours* ; delegated by him to treat of peace, and solicit a

* *Vide Mal. 2. 7. For the Priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the Messenger of the Lord of hosts.*

fair correspondence between heaven and earth. Now then (saith S. Paul) *we* 2 Cor. 5. 20. *are Embassadours for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God. As though God did beseech you by us; see, they manage God's concerns, and in a manner represent his person. At least, if the Apostles were more properly God's Embassadours, the present Ministers of Religion are his Agents, and Residents here among men, designed to pursue the same negotiations commended by them. Now you know by the law of Nations, and common consent of*

all men, all manner of security, good entertainment, and civill respect hath been ever acknowledged due to Embassadours, (and publick Ministers :) their employment hath been esteemed honourable, their persons held sacred and inviolable ; and whatsoever discourtesie hath been shewed unto, or outrage committed upon them, hath been interpreted done to him from whom they derive their commission, whose person they represent. And so truly the bad usage of God's Priests, if not directly and immediately, does yet really and truly, according to morall estimation, terminate on God himself, and reflect on his Honour, and prejudice his Religion ; a due regard to which cannot be maintained, without proportionable respect to the Ministers thereof. The basest of the people may serve to be Priests to *Jeroboam's Calves*, but not become the Ministry of the God of *Israel*.

Do we not see the reverence of Civil Government upheld more by the specious circumstances, then by the real necessity thereof ; by the magnificent retinue, and splendid ornaments of Princely dignity, then by the eminent benefits

*Joh. 13. 20.
What you
have done to
these, &c.
Matt. 10. 40.
& 25. 40.
He that re-
ceiveth you,
receiveth him
that sent you.*

benefits of peace and justice springing thence? Shall not (not onely the greatest inward worth, but) the highest Nobility, if basely attired, badly attended, slenderly accommodated, pass unregarded, yea disregarded by us? men being generally either unable to discern, or unwilling to acknowledge excellency devested of sensible lustre. Religion therefore must be well habited, or it will be ill respected: the Priests must wear a comely (if not a costly) livery, or God their Master's reputation will be impaired in popular fancy.

Consider *David's* reasoning; *Loe, I dwell in a house of Cedars, but the Ark of the covenant of the Lord remaineth under Curtains*; and compare such discourse therewith as this; and judge candidly, whether they have not some parity: Loe, my Attendants are clad with the finest purple, God's Ministers are covered with the coarsest sackcloth; my People surfeit with dainties, his Servants pine away for scarcity; my Courtiers are respectfully saluted, his Priests scornfully derided; no man dare offend mine, every one may trample on his Officers.

And lest we should imagine God
 I i 4 himself

Mal. i. 8.

himself altogether void of such resentments, or such comparisons impertinent; consider that disdainfull expression of his; *If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if you offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it now to thy governour; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts.* The same testimonies of respect that we shew our Governours, God, it seems, expects from us in all kinds, and may reasonably much greater.

Deut. 18. 1, 2.

Nor is it a matter of slight consideration, how plentiful provision, in the policy devised and constituted by God himself, was made for the Priests; how God assumes the immediate patronage of them, and appropriates the matter of their sustenance unto himself. *The Priests (saith the Law) the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and his inheritance. Therefore they shall have no inheritance among their brethren: the Lord is their inheritance.* So that then (it seems) no man could withhold any part of the Priests maintenance, without sacrilegious encroachment

ment on God's own right, and robbing him of his due : (which is the greatest security of an estate imaginable.) How likewise (next to the Prince) the highest dignity and authority was then conferr'd on the Priests : to them the interpretation of law , to them the decision of doubtfull cases did appertain ; with severe injunctions to comply with their determinations. See how the business is inculcated. *If there arise a matter too hard for thee, between bloud and bloud, between plea and plea, between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates ; then shalt thou arise, and get thee up unto the place which the Lord thy God shall chuse : And thou shalt come unto the Priests the Levites, and unto the Judge that shall be in those days, and enquire ; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment. And thou shalt doe according to the sentence which they of that place, which the Lord shall chuse, shall shew thee ; and thou shalt observe to doe according to all that they inform thee. According to the sentence of the Law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt doe : thou shalt not decline from the sentence, which they shall*

Deut. 17. 8,
9, 10, 11, 12.

shall shew thee, to the right hand, nor to the left. And the man that will doe presumptuously, and will not hearken to the Priest, that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, even that man shall die, and thou shalt put away evil from Israel. Observe with how eminent a power God then thought fit to endow

* Καὶ ὃ ἐπὶ his Priests *.

πάντων,
καὶ δικασαὶ ἑῶν ἀμφισβητημάτων, καὶ κολασαὶ ἑῶν κατηγνομένων οἱ ἱερεῖς ἐτάχθησαν, saith Josephus: The Priests were constituted Superiours of all things, and Judges of controversies, and Punishers of offences. 2. in Apionem.

And though we are not in all cases obliged punctually to follow those political prescriptions; yet is the reason of them perpetual, and the example venerable: especially since the custom of all Times, and the reason of all the World doth in a sort conspire to back it.

Gen. 14.

The first Priest we meet with in Scripture is Melchizedek; a King also; and such a one, as the Patriarch Abraham, (a Prince also himself, and, what is somewhat more, just then a Conquerour,) in the midst of his triumphal heights, was not ashamed to acknowledge his superiour, to honour him with a tribute of his spoils, and to receive

ceive a benediction from him. The next (if I mistake not) is *Potipherah*, Gen. 41. 45. Priest of *On*, whose daughter was not thought by the King of *Egypt* an unequal match for *Joseph*, his chief Favourite, and the next in dignity to himself in that flourishing Kingdom. (Though such an alliance would perhaps be thought derogatory to the Worship of our days.) The third is *Reuel*, or *Jethro*, Priest of *Midian*, the Father-in-law likewise of the illustrious *Moses*; a man as of approved wisdom, so doubtless of considerable dignity too. And the next to him (in order of story) is the venerable *Aaron*, no meaner a man, then the Brother of him who was *King in Jeshurun*. Thus all Nations, wise and ignorant, civil and barbarous, were by one common instinct (as it were) of natural reason prompted, by conferring extraordinary privileges of honour and convenience on their Priests, to express their reverence of the Deity, and their affection to Religion.

I will not ransack the closets of Antiquity, nor with needless ostentation produce the *Egyptian Hierophanta*,

* the

Vid. Aristot. Pol. VII. 9.
Οὐτε γὰρ μαργὸν, ἢ τὸ βάναν-
σον ἱερεῖα καλεστέον. ὡς
γὰρ οἱ πολῖται πρέπει π-
μᾶρς τοῦ θεοῦ.

* Porph. *de*
Στοχ. lib. IV.
 S. 16.
Cæf. de bell.
Gall. L. VI.

Lib. 6.

Πάντα τὰ
 πρᾶγματ' αἰ
 * Ρωμαίοις οἱ
 ἦ ὁ δὲ ἀνὴρ
 30. Plut. in
 Marcellō.

Sen. in Con-
 trov.

* the *Persian Magi*, the *Gaulish Druids*, the *Caliphs* and *Musti's* of other Nations, to shew what preeminencies of respect they enjoyed, what powerfull sway they bore in their respective countries; how the most weighty affairs, both of peace and war, were commonly directed by their oracular dictates. It shall suffice to observe, that the gallant *Romans*, (whose devout zeal to religion *Polybius* himself, no especial friend of theirs, could not forbear to admire and applaud,) I say, that the most wise and valiant *Romans* did set so high a value upon the Priestly order, that if their principal Magistrates (the *Prætors*, and *Consuls* themselves) did casually meet with one of *Vesta's* Priests, they caused immediately those dreadful Rods, the ensigns of their Authority, to submit; and they themselves respectfully gave place, as if they meant to confess those Priests in a manner their betters. Nor did they among them of the most noble extraction, and of the highest dignity in the Commonwealth, (even after many glorious exploits achieved by them,) scornfully disdain, but did rather ambitiously affect to be admitted into the College of Priests:
 info-

insomuch that, after the dissolution of the Republick, the Emperours thought good to assume the *Pontificall* dignity to themselves, supposing the Office too honourable, the title too magnificent for a Subject. For they wisely, it seems, and honestly adjudged it no debasement of their quality, no diminution to their personal excellency, to be employed in the service of the immortal Gods; whom they acknowledged the Patrons of their Country, the Protectours of their safety: Nor that they less deserved of the publick, who rightly ordered their religious Devotions, then they who prudently advised in the Senate, or fought valiantly in the field: for that the good success of publick undertakings did as much, or more, depend upon the favourable disposition of Divine Providence, as upon the carefull endeavour of humane industry.

I cannot forbear to allege that so grave and pertinent speech of *Cicero*, which is the *Exordium* of his Oration *ad Pontifices*: "*Cum multa divinitus, Pontifices, à majoribus nostris inventa atque instituta sunt; tum nihil præclarior, quàm quòd vos eosdem & Religio-*
nibus Deorum immortalium, & sum-
me"

“*mæ Reip. præesse voluerunt : ut amplif-
 “simi & clarissimi Cives Rempubl. bene
 “gerendo, Religiones sapienter interpre-
 “tando, Remp. conservarent.* A whol-
 some and politick institution he thought
 it, conducible to the publick good and
 safety, that the Civil and Sacred Autho-
 rity should be united in the same per-
 sons ; that it was as well for the inte-
 rest of the State, as for the credit of
 Religion, that the Priests should be
 men of honour, or (which is all one)
 honourable men Priests.

All which evinces plainly, that it is
 in no wise the result of a generous heart,
 (for what Nation ever produced so
 many brave spirits as that?) but ra-
 ther proceeds from an inconsiderate de-
 licacy of humour, (or from a profane
 haughtiness of mind,) to loath, as now
 men do, and despise that employment,
 which in its own nature is of all most

noble, and most beneficial
 to mankind. For if to be
 a Courtier in a particular
 Country, is of all others the
 most honourable relation ;
 and to wait upon a mortall
 King, is accounted a most
 worthy function : to be pe-
 culiarly

*Itane, plus decet homi-
 nis, quam Dei famulum
 nominari ? ac terreni quam
 cælestis Regis officialem,
 altioris ducitur dignitatis ?
 Qui Clero militiam, forum
 anteposit Ecclesie, divinis
 profectio humana, cælestibus
 præferre terrena convinci-
 tur. Bern. Epist. 78.*

culiarly God's Servant, and in Religious addresſes immediately to attend on him, muſt conſequently be the moſt excellent preferment in the World, which is God's Kingdom. And if to ſupply a man's bodily needs, to reſtore his liberty, to ſave his life, be works of generous beneficence : how much more is it ſo, by good conduct and inſtruction of men, to adorn their Souls with Vertue, to free them from the bondage of Sin, to reſcue them from eternall ruine ?

Our magnanimous Anceſſours, who erected as well trophees of their invincible courage abroad, as monuments of their incomparable piety at home, and equally by both did purchaſe immortal renown to their ingratefull poſterity, (for not to imitate good example, is the greateſt ingratitude,) they, I ſay, were otherwiſe diſpoſed ; to whoſe honeſt Devotion we owe thoſe handſome privileges, and thoſe competent revenues which the Prieſthood ſtill enjoys ; and which are ſo maligned by this untoward Age, not leſs degenerate in ſpirit, then corrupt in manners : when all Wiſedom, and Vertue, and Religion, are almoſt in moſt places
grown

grown ridiculous : when the serious use of Reason is become (in vulgar opinion) the most impertinent and insignificant thing in the world : when Innocence is reputed a meer defect of wit, and weakness of judgment ; Integrity, a fond pertinacity of humour ; Constancy of mind, and Gravity of demeanour, a kind of sullen morosity, or uncouth affectation of singularity ; and all strict practice of Christian Duty incurs the imputation of some new-found opprobrious name, one or other. No wonder then, when Religion it self hath so much decayed in its love and esteem, if the Priests, its professed Guardians, do partake in its fortune. Nor is it to be feared, but that, when the predominant vanities of the Age are somewhat decocted, and men grow weary of their own inconvenient follies ; when-ever (not a fierce zeal for some whimsical Model, or some paradoxicall Opinion, but) a sober esteem of, and a cordial affection to Vertue and genuine Piety do begin to revive in the breasts of men ; the love and reverence of the *Clergy* will return. For it will be ever true, what was once said, (though dictated onely from the
reason

reason and experience of a Heathen,)

Qui bonâ fide colit Deos, amat & Sacer- Statius, E-
dotes ; He that sincerely worships God, pist. Dedic.
will heartily love his Priests. But not in V. lib.
to insist longer on this Reason. Sylvarum.

II. The Good of the Church requires, that the Priesthood be well protected, well provided for, and well regarded. That men be converted from iniquity, and induced to the sincere practice of Vertue, is the chief Good of the Church, that to which the Favour of God is annexed, and upon which the Salvation of Souls doth rely. And this Good mainly depends, partly upon the due execution of the Priestly office, partly upon the fit disposition of the people to comply therewith : and to both those effects the comfortable estate of the Priesthood is conducive and requisite. The Priest must be capable to instruct with advantage ; and the people disposed to learn with readiness : He must lead, and They follow chearfully in the paths of righteousness. Which alacrity how can he be Master of, whose mind care and grief, the inseparable companions of a needy estate, do continually distract and discompose ? whose spirit is dejected with constant regret,

and frequent disappointments? Can he be free and expedite in the discharge of his duty, who is perplexed with the difficulties, and encumbered with the varieties of secular business, (such as the exigencies of a narrow condition do necessarily induce?) No: few there be, that, with *Epictetus*, can philosophate in slavery; or, like *Cleanthes*, can draw water all the day, and study most of the night.

The Priests are bound, (for the propagation of truth and right, and for the reclaiming of men from error and sin, that is, for the most important good of the Church,) as the Apostles are often related to have done, *παρρησιάζεσθαι*, to speak all out; (or to use an unconfin'd liberty of speech;) to exhort to the practice of Vertue, as our Saviour did, *μετ' ἐξουσίας*, with licence and authority; to deterr from Vice, as S. Paul enjoyns *Titus*, *μετὰ πάσης ἐπιταγῆς*, with an all-commanding and imperious strain; and, (as those faithfull brethren did, encouraged by S. Paul's example) *παλὴν ἀρβύρας λαλεῖν τὸ λόγον*, to dare undauntedly to utter the word of truth: they are obliged to deal impartially with all, to flatter no man; to admo-

Acts 9. 27.
& 14. 3. &
19. 8.

Eph. 6. 19.
&c.

Luk. 4. 32.

Tit. 2. 15.

Phil. 1. 14.

nish, yea and (with prudence seasonably) to reprove the greatest of men; not to respect the persons of the rich, nor to dread the faces of the most terrible among men. And how shall this necessary courage be engendred, be cherished, be preserved in the breast of him who grovels upon the ground, and crouches under the depressing loads of want and disgrace? What engines are able to raise the spirits of men above the ordinary fountains from which they spring, their fortunes? what props can sustain them at that due pitch, destitute of solid strength, wealth, and respect? With what face shall a pitifull underling encounter the solemn looks of an oppressing Grandee? with what hope of success in his forlorn habit shall he adventure to check the vicious extravagancies of a ruffling gallant? Will he dare to contradict the opinion, or to disallow the practice of that wealthy, or this powerfull neighbour, by whose alms, it may be, he is relieved, and supported by his favour?

But admit it possible a man may be both extreamly indigent, and sufficiently resolute: (that is, strong without food, and fat by digesting the thin air:)

— plurima
sunt quæ
Non audent
homines per-
tusa dicere
lana.
Juven. Sat.
5.
Αἰδώς τοι
πρὸς ἀνολ-
είη, θάρρος
ὃ πρὸς ὀλβῳ.
Hes. 1. 317.
Πρὸς ἀπαντα
δειλὸς ὁ πίνης
ὅτι πρὸς γυ-
τα, καὶ πάν-
τας αὐτῶ κα-
τατρονῶν
ὑπολαμβά-
νει. Menand.

with what regard then shall his free and faithfull advice be entertained? Shall not his moderate confidence be accounted impudence; his open sincerity of speech be styled unmannerly presumption; his minding others of their duty adjudged a forgetfulness of his own condition, or a disorderly transgressing the due limits thereof? If he be not ashamed of the truth, will not the truth be ashamed of him? Shall he not prejudice more by the meanness of his garb, then further by the force of his reason, that good cause which he maintains? Will men respect his words, whose person they despise? will they be willingly counselled, or patiently reproved by him, whom they esteem, yea, whom they plainly see, so much their inferiour? No: the same words, which proceed from the mouths of men in eminent dignity, are not the same when they are uttered by those of base degree. Weak and ineffectual are the most eloquent harangues of beggarly Oratours; obscure like themselves and unobserved the most notable dictates of poor mercenary pedants. The authority of the speaker doth usually more incline, then the weight of the matter.

It

Τὸ δ' ἀξίωμα, καὶ κα-
κῶς λέγει,
τὸ σὺν πείσει;
Λόγος γὰρ ἐν
τ' ἀδολξάντων
ἰών, καὶ ὅς
δοκάντων,
αὐτὸς, ὃ ταυ-
τὸν δέει.
Eurip. in
Hecuba.

It was the observation of the wise Son of Sirach : *When a rich man slips, he bath many helpers ; he speaketh things not to be spoken, and yet men justifie him : the poor man miscarried, and they farther rebuked him ; he spake discreetly, and yet could have no place. When a rich man speaketh, every man holdeth his tongue ; and his words they extoll to the clouds : but if the poor man speak, they say, Who is this ? and if he stumble, they will help to overthrow him.* And Solomon himself notes the same : *The poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.* Not onely those that swell with pride, and swim in plenty, but even the meanest of the people will be apt to contemn his instructions, whom they perceive in few or no circumstances of life to excell them. If the Preacher's condition be not, as well as his pulpit, somewhat elevated above the lowest station, few will hear him, fewer mind his words, very few obey him. Job's case deserves well to be considered. While he flourished in wealth and reputation, all men attended to his counsell, and admired his discourse. *The Princes (saith he) refrained talking, and laid their hand on*

Eccles 13. 22, 23.
Kάλλισα Μὲ-
σῶν φθίγγε-
ται πλετῶν
ἀνθρ.
Eccles 9. 16.
Job 29. 9, 10,
11, 21, 22.

The Twelfth Sermon.

their mouth : The Nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard me, then it blessed me ; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me. Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsell. After my words they spake not again, and my speech dropped upon them. So officiously attentive were all men to Job in his prosperity. But when the scale was turn'd, and he became depressed in estate, no man minded either him or his discourse ; except it were to despise and scorn both.

Job 30. 1, 9,
10, 11.

Prov. 14. 20.
The poor is
hated even
of his own
neighbour :
but the rich
hath many
friends.

* c. 30. 25.

*But now (saith he) they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock. I am their song, yea, I am their by-word. They abhor me, they fly far from me, and spare not to spit in my face : Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me. If Job, a person who so equally and moderately, yea so * humbly and courteously and bountifully used his prosperity, as we find he did, was notwithstanding in his adversity so generally slighted and abhorred ; what shall their lot be, who never enjoyed those advantages ? what regard shall their wholesome advice find ?
what*

what efficacy their most pathetical exhortations obtain? what passion their faint breath raise in mens benumbed hearts? No more, certainly, then their mean condition shall procure among men either of friendship or esteem.

We see therefore how Almighty God, that he might conciliate credit unto, and infuse a persuasive energy into the words of his Prophets and Apostles, was pleased to dignifie them with extraordinary gifts of foretelling future events, and doing miraculous works: their Doctrine, it seems, (though of it self most reasonable and plausible,) being not sufficient to convince the hearers, without some remarkable excellency in the Teachers, challenging the people's awfull regard, and exciting their attention. Otherwise how pitifully-scant a draught those poor fishers of men had caught by the common allurements onely of innocent life, and rational discourse, I leave you to imagine. And where such extraordinary commendations are wanting, is it not reasonable that the need of them should be supplied by ordinary and probable expedients?

I might farther adde, how a necessi-

tous and despicable estate doth commonly not onely disturb the minds, and deject the spirits of men ; but distempereth also their Souls, and viciateth their manners ; rendring them not onely sad and anxious, slavish and timorous, but greedy also and covetous, peevish and mutinous, rude and ignorant : engages them in sordid company, and tempts them to unworthy courses. From which one cause how scandalous effects, and how prejudicial to the Church's both honour and safety, have proceeded, I need not for to say, since wofull experience too loudly proclaims it.

I might adde moreover, that the Priests do confer to the good of the State ; which is secured and advanced by the sincere instruction of men in duties of Obedience, Justice, and Fidelity ; and by maintenance of good Conscience among men. So that if things be rightly considered, it will be hard to find a better Commonwealths-man, then a good Minister.

Seeing therefore the good of the Church, upon various accounts, is so much concerned in the Priests encouragement, welfare and respect ; 'tis very
fitting

fitting they should have them. Which consideration I conclude with that serious admonition of the Apostle to the Hebrews; wherein the substance of what hath been spoken on this point is contained: *Obey your rulers, (or guides,) Heb. 13. 17. and submit to them; for they watch for your souls, as they that are to give an account: that they may do it with joy, and not with complaint; for this is un-* ^{μη σε διχο-} *profitable for you.* Ἀλυσιτελὲς γὰρ τὸ τοῦτο. ^{τες.} that is, *for this pays no taxes, quits no scores; turns to no account, is no-wise advantageous for you; but rather (for there is a μέωσις in those words) is hurtfull and detrimental to you. But farther,*

III. Common Equity, and the Reason of the case exacts, that safety, competent subsistence, and fitting respect be allowed to the Priests. If you consider their Personal qualities; who, I pray, do [commonly] better deserve those advantages then they? Those qualities, I say, which result from a liberal, a sober, a modest education, in the Schools of wisdom, and under the influences of good discipline. If Birth (that is, at best, an imaginary relation to the gallantry of an Ancestour) entitle men to Honour; if

if the cheap favours of Fortune be so highly prized and admired ; if Riches (that is, the happy results of industry in trivial matters) do easily purchase respect : what may not they pretend to, whose constant (and not always unsuccessfull) endeavour it hath been to deserve well, to cultivate their minds, and regulate their manners ?

*Vid. Orig.
contra Cels.
l. 3. pag. 129.*

Mal. 2. 7.

True worth indeed is not confined to any particular order of men ; yet I should wrong none, by saying it is nowhere more plentifully to be found than in this. What is it that doth advance mens nature, that adorns their minds, that commends their persons to especial regard ? Is it Knowledge ? *The Priests lips preserve it* ; their discourse doth diffuse it. Is it Vertue ? Whence have more, or greater examples thereof proceeded then from them ? Is it Piety ? It is their proper business, it hath been always (in some measure) their care to promote it : That ignorance and barbarity, dissoluteness and irreligion have not long since, like a deluge, overspread the face of the world, none, I suppose, will be so unjust, as to deny in greatest part due to their vigilant endeavours. Even those improvements

ments of Wit and Eloquence, which are employed to their disgrace and disadvantage, must be acknowledged originally derived from them.

Faults they have had, and will always have; for they are Men, and subject to the common imperfections of mortal nature: but that, perhaps, less and fewer than any other distinct sort of men; that as it is their duty, so it hath been their practice, to excell in Vertue; and that they have commonly in effect made good S. Ambrose his words, *Debet præponderare vita sacerdotis, sicut præponderat gratia*; were not difficult to demonstrate, if seemly to make comparisons, or to insist upon so invidious a subject. Nor, were they greater then ever really they have been, or then ever malice could misrepresent them, should it be therefore equal, that the miscarriages of some should derogate from the reputation, or prejudice the welfare of the whole Order.

Epist. 82.

But to wave this plea; consider their Employment. Is there any office more laborious, more vexatious then theirs; accompanied with more wearisome toil, more solicitous care, more tedious attendance? They are deservedly called
Watch-

Heb. 13. 17. *Watchmen*, being constrained to stand always on the guard, to be always wakefull, attentive, and ready to warn the people of approaching dangers: and *Shepherds* likewise, being forced to endure the various hardships of that uneasie life, the inconveniences of all weathers, the nipping frosts, and sweltry heats, and all diversities of irksome travail; they must feed, they must guide, they must defend; they must seek the lost, and reduce the straying sheep. What assiduity of study, what earnest contention of Soul are they obliged to use, in the continual instruction, exhortation, and reprehension of the people; in rectifying their judgements, satisfying their scruples, removing their prejudices, bearing their infirmities, and sympathizing with their afflictions? 'Tis they that are engaged with all their might to withstand the prevailing encroachments of Iniquity, to stop the progress of pernicious Errours, to detect the false pretences of Impostours, to confute the fallacies of Sophisters, to repell the assaults of all Adversaries to the truth; yea, if need be, to expose, not onely their dearest contents of life, but even their lives themselves, in the defence thereof.

En-

Eusebius reports thus of Maximinus, Lib. VI.

Τὸς τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν ἀρχοντας μόνους, ὡς αἵτινες ἔχουσιν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον διδασκαλίας, ἀναιρεῖναι προσάττει. He commanded that *only the Governours of the Church* (that is, *the Bishops*) *should be slaughtered, as the Authours of the growth and prevalence of Evangelical Doctrine.* Neither was it a singular practice of that bloody Tyrant, but as a thing of course it constantly follows, that where-ever Righteousness and Truth are violently impugned, the Priests are sure to taste deepest of that bitter cup; that their Goods be in the first place sequestred and spoiled, their Reputation stained, their Persons misused, their Lives sacrificed to the Persecutours outrageous malice.

Is it not reasonable then, and equal, that they who, for the service of God, and benefit of the Church, undergo such difficulties, and are objected to so great hazzards, should be sustained, should be refreshed by proportionable encouragements? Is it not barbarous usage, to expect so hard duties from them, to impose such heavy burthens on them, and yet to grudge any suitable comforts, any satisfactory rewards to them?

- them? Good King *Hezekiah* surely was not so minded, of whom 'tis said, *He*
 2 Chron. 31. *commanded the people that dwell in Hierusalem, to give the portion of the Priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the Law of the Lord: that is, that they might be heartned to study, to teach, to perform the duties required of them by the Divine Law. And Saint Paul thus rationally expostulates in the*
 4. *Priests behalf: Who ever goeth to war at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? If we have sown unto you spiritual things; is it a great thing, if we shall reap your carnal things? Is it a great thing? do you think much of it? If you do, you are unreasonable, you are unjust, you are ingratefull. And otherwhere he thus very emphatically admonishes; We beseech you, brethren, to*
 1 Cor. 9. 7, 11. ** mind them which labour among you, and*
 Vid. Rom. 15. 27. *|| preside over you in the Lord, and that admonish you; and to esteem them more then exceedingly (ὑπερπερισσῶς) in love, for their work (or, for their office) sake: (so ἐργον frequently signifies in such cases.) And again; Let the Elders (or*
 1 Thess. 5. 12, 13. *Priests, or πρεσβυτεροι,) which rule well*
 * ἐκινῶντες.
 || καὶ ὡς ἰησοῦς.
 1 Tim. 5. 17. *be*

be counted worthy of double honour: (or, of double recompence: so τῆς also imports.) Priests as so, for their office sake, have honour and reward due to them; which, according to the good management of that office, are proportionably to be augmented and multiplied.

But farther yet, abstracting from both their personal worth, and the merit of their service, consider their Condition in this world, and see whether it doth not in equity challenge some reasonable provision to be made for them. Are they not, by the nature of their profession, secluded from all ordinary means of temporal advancement? Be not those usual inlets of Wealth, the Court, the Camp, and the Exchange, shut upon them, yea barr'd against them, by those insuperable obstacles of Law and Custom? Can they grow rich by trade, or famous by feats of arms? May they plead for others? 'tis well if they be allowed to doe it for themselves before equal judges. Yet are they not Men, endued with humane passions and resentments? Are they not Citizens, partaking in the common interests of the weal publick? Are they not sensible of the inconveniences, and capable of enjoying

joying the benefits of this life? Are they not equally obliged, and would they not be glad, as well as others, to be in a capacity to requite courtesies, to help relations, to gratifie friends, to relieve the poor, to express respectively their humanity, and their gratitude? Skill they not to use the goods of Fortune (or rather the gifts of Providence) with as much discretion, as much sobriety, as much honour, as others? Compare things righteously, and let Reason judge; let Experience be examined; let those eternal monuments of their Piety, their Charity, their Hospitality, declare and testifie. Shall, lastly, the fruits of painfull study, the improvement of hopefull parts, the flower of vigorous age and strength spent in the publick service, tend onely hither, to put a man into a state of struggling with extream contempt and penury? If this be not, what, I pray you, is monstrous iniquity?

Since therefore it appears (upon so many several scores) reasonable, that Almighty God should undertake the protection, and assert the honour of his Priests; we may not onely praise the goodness,

goodness, but approve also the wisdom of this promise ; and by the contemplation thereof strengthen our faith in reliance thereon. To which purpose one Consideration more may very much conduce, and withall may provoke our gratitude to celebrate his truth and faithfulness, in making good, as well as his goodness and wisdom, in making this Promise ; viz. the considering how continually hitherto God hath been pleased effectually to *cloath* his *Priests with Salvation*, to provide abundantly for their safety, their accommodation, their respect in this world ; and to deliver them from the opposite inconveniences.

If we reflect our thoughts on the first Ages of Christianity, (not more dismal for Suffering, then glorious for Piety,) 'tis admirable to see how sincerely and passionately the Christian people did then love their Priests and Pastours ; how liberally, out of their slender stock, and the shipwrecks of their spoiled fortunes, they contributed to their maintenance ; what exceeding veneration they bore them ; with what incredible alacrity they submitted to the most severe disciplines enjoined by them ; how willingly they followed them, though

leading into the jaws of death and cruel torture : so that , although it was then necessary for the Christian Priests to undergo the greatest hardships , according to the design of Christian Religion ; (which was to be propagated , not by terror of Power , nor by politick Artifice , but by the invincible Faith , Resolution and Patience of the Professours and Teachers thereof ;) yet never more may they have seemed to thrive and prosper , then in that juncture of time , when they enjoyed the universal good will and applause of good people , when they unconstrainedly embraced affliction for righteousness sake , and acquired thereby the certain fruition of a more excellent Salvation.

But in the succeeding Times , when Christianity , breaking out of the clouds of Persecution , began to shine over all with brightest lustre ; of the glories and happy fruits of that illustrious triumph none did partake more fully , then they , who had sustained the hardest brunts of the foregoing conflict , and had been the principal causes of the success. Then the joyfull acclamations of the faithfull people resounded in the praise of their victorious Champions : then did the
Em-

Emperours themselves, with arms outstretched, and hearts enlarged, with affection embrace the authours of their happy Conversion: then all Laws prejudicial to their welfare were rescinded, and new ones were substituted, abundantly providing for their security, honest livelihood, and due reverence; which in progress of time, not in the *Roman Empire* onely, but in all other Nations (that afterwards did entertain Christianity) were no-wise impaired, but were rather amplified and fortified by the pious favour of Princes: The barbarous *Goths*, and *Vandals*, and *Lombards*, being no sooner endued with any degree of Civility, or any sense of Religion, then possessed with a hearty reverence of their Bishops, and Priests.

And ever since, (which is not to be imputed, as some rashly, if not impiously, averre, to the prevalence of Antichristian iniquity, but rather to the Providence of Divine Benignity; ever since, I say,) till the late Commotions and Alterations in Christendom, they have been the Guardians of others safety, not themselves deprived of protection; have abounded with wealth, rather then wanted sustenance; have been

the objects of envy, more then of contempt. Princes have loved and cherished them, have relied upon their advice; and entrusted them with their highest concernments. Nobles have not been ashamed to yield them place. The Sacerdotal robe hath been often dyed with purple; and the Sons of mighty Monarchs have not thought themselves degraded by entring into their Order. And if in some particular places (before or since those Changes) their condition hath not been so high and plentiful; yet hath it been (almost ever) tolerable; the countenance of Authority, and the respect of the people being in good degree vouchsafed them. Even in those Churches which till this day groan under the oppression of Infidel Princes; the Priests (by the free permission of those Princes) retain their jurisdiction in a manner as great as ever; and withall enjoy a maintenance not altogether inconsiderable.

So favourable hitherto hath God been unto his Priests, so faithfull to his Promise: which doth oblige us to thank him; which may encourage us to hope in him; which may arm us with confidence against the present ill will of those
that

that wish, and against the practices of those that design our ruine.

'Tis true, This Promise is not affixed to all parts of time, to all particularities of place, to all determinate circumstances of things. The Priests may now and then, here and there, in this or that suffer highly; they may be ejected, be plundered, be degraded, as experience hath shewed us. But they may be also soon restored, re-possessed, re-advanced, and (I had almost said) revenged too; as the like experience doth assure us.

'Tis not impossible, I confess, we may relapse into the same, or into a more calamitous estate; the obstinate disaffections of men threaten it, and our own miscarriages more dangerously: yet the most offensive of these (which many honest men dislike, and most men exclaim against) have been in as bitter terms complained of in almost the first Ages. "*Inhiant possessionibus, prædia ex-*

"colunt, auro incubant, quæstui per omnia student," said a devout Writer of Ecclesiastical history about 1300 years agoe. And so much no man (without extream uncharitableness and fallshood) can in so general terms impute to the present Clergy: notwithstanding which,

Sulp. Sev.
Lib. 1. c. 43.

Pf. 89. 32, 33,
34.

God did continue to vouchsafe his protection to them. They were sometimes, (by the inundations of barbarous people,) and we may again (by national concussions) be severely chastised for our faults : Yet were not they, nor shall we be (at least every-where, and for ever) utterly rejected. God may *visit our transgressions with the rod, and our iniquity with stripes* : Nevertheless *his loving-kindness will he not utterly take from us, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. His covenant he will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips.* God may for a time hide his face from us ; but he will not for ever turn his back upon us : the honour of the Priesthood may for a while be overclouded in some part of the world ; but shall never totally be eclipsed , nor swallowed up in a perpetual night. While God continues his residence in *Sion* , and defends his Church against *the gates of Hell*, and *powers of darkness* ; while Religion retains any sway in the hearts of men, and Truth possesses any room upon earth ; the Priests shall not be left destitute and naked , but everlastingly be *cloathed with salvation.* Which that it may (to the Glory of God, and Good
of

of his Church) more surely come to pass,
let us convert this Promise into a Prayer,
and say with Solomon, *Now therefore* 2 Chron. 6.
arise, O Lord God, thou and the ark of 41.
thy strength: Let thy Priests, O Lord
God, be cloathed with salvation, and let
thy Saints rejoyce in goodness. Amen.



THE END.

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